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## PREFACE.

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THE design of the following work is to assemble together all that is most interesting relative to Africa; to bring whatever may have been described by different travellers, or mentioned at various times by the same traveller, into one point of view; and to form the whole into a regular narrative. It appeared to me that these objects would be best attained by creating an imaginary traveller, who should speak in his own person. I am aware that truth and fiction should not be mingled, and I have not mingled them. They are distinct, though they constantly appear together; the traveller himself being ideal, and all he recounts true, as far as the best authors can be relied upon:

This method seemed to me to offer many advantages. It has enabled me to avoid all discussions, arguments, and contradictions: it has afforded me an opportunity of introducing some observations of my own: it gives to the information it conveys an air of consistency, perspicuity, and originality: it spares the reader the fatigue of referring to authorities; yet, if any choose that labour, he may find that all I have ventured to relate is well authenti-

cated. The Travellers from whose works the present volume has been compiled are: Pococke, Bruce, Niebuhr, Volney, Savary, Sonnini, Denon, Sir Robert Wilson, and Legh, for Egypt; Horneman, for Fezzan; Browne, for Dar Fûr; and Bruce, for Abyssinia and Sennaar. Truth has been my first object; my next has been to select the most important truths, and to arrange them correctly, and geographically; chronology I have studiously avoided, as it would have destroyed my plan. My third object was to render truth as agreeable as my abilities would allow, and as concise as possible.

The present volume contains an account of Egypt, and those countries which have been visited from Egypt: it is therefore complete. But it is my intention to conduct my traveller home by the Cape of Good Hope, the Coast of Guinea, and the States of Barbary; thus performing the Tour of Africa.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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I AM the son of an English country gentleman of good family and large fortune. The first thing impressed upon my mind by my mother was, that I was born to be a great traveller. Whether the hearing of this predestination constantly repeated, during my infancy, had any influence in forming my character, or whether I really came into the world with an inclination to travel, I must leave to philosophers to determine; but certain it is that, when I could escape from my nurse, I was found in some field, or on some path where I had not been before. As I grew older, I never saw a hill, but I wished to know what was beyond it; and I never heard of a town, but I formed an idea of it, and fancied myself in it.

My father died when I was twelve years of age, and my mother survived him only a year. At twenty-one, I found myself rich, independent, bound to my native country by no tie of consanguinity, and I resolved to fulfil my destiny, or gratify my inclination, whichever were the ruling principle, by seeing the world.

Having resolved upon travelling, I passed three sleepless nights in considering the subject. I had always been partial to Asia. The arts and customs of China, the temples and manufactures of India, the diamonds and pearls with which the thrones and garments of the Asiatic monarchs are covered, had



long been powerful stimulants of my curiosity. I then revolved in my mind the forests, lakes, and bears of Canada, the ruins of ancient Mexico and Peru, the meteors of the Andes, and the mines of Potosi. I afterwards recollected that some very sagacious persons had decided that one should begin one's travels at home, and I passed one whole night in the resolution of commencing mine by the tour of Europe. I then considered Africa: and the Niles and the Negroes, Timbuctoo and Gondar, gold and ostrich's feathers, elephants and elephants' teeth, rhinoceroses and camelopardalises, black ladies with rings in their noses, and brown ladies with bracelets and gaiters of sheep's guts, left me no room for hesitation.

Having determined upon the Tour of Africa, and made the necessary arrangements for remittances to be forwarded to me at different places, I embarked on board a vessel bound to Alexandria, and arrived at that city in perfect safety. I took no servant with me, choosing to hire attendants in the course of my travels, as occasion might require.

## CHAPTER I.

### LOWER EGYPT.

#### ALEXANDRIA AND ROSETTA.

**A**LEXANDER, returning from Lybia to Egypt, was struck with the situation and beauty of two ports. An architect, who accompanied him, traced out the plan of a city, and the first of the Ptolemies built it, and called it Alexandria. Situated on the edge of the Lybian Desert, it was without water; this, Ptolemy was obliged to bring from the Nile, far above, by a canal, which supplies Alexandria to this day. The city was from twenty-one to twenty-four miles in circumference. All that remains of it are two obelisks called Cleopatra's needles, and the subterraneous cisterns; what is called Pompey's pillar having been erected in honour of Severus.

Cleopatra's Needles are each formed of a single block of granite, 63 feet in height, and 7 feet in breadth on every side, at the base, and covered with hieroglyphics. One of these only is standing; the other being near it, and prostrate on the ground. They are supposed to have ornamented the gate of the palace of the Egyptian kings; but the very vestiges of ancient ruins are covered many yards deep by rubbish, the remnant of the devastations of later times; and Cleopatra, were she to return to life, would scarcely know where her palace was situated, in this her own capital.

Pompey's pillar is a column of the Corinthian order, 88 feet 6 inches in height. The shaft is of a single block of granite, 64 feet in height, and 8 feet 4 inches in diameter, generally retaining the finest polish. The Arabs have endeavoured to blow it up, believing a treasure to be concealed under it. Their ignorance prevented its destruction, and the French filled up the aperture they had made with cement, fearing that it might, in time, injure the column. I am ashamed to add, that the English broke the cement away, and even English officers were seen pulling off pieces of the pillar to carry home. At length a centinel was placed to guard a monument of antiquity, which had stood unprotected for ages among barbarians. I do not approve of the design of the French to transport Pompey's Pillar intire to Paris; but I own I think it less reprehensible than to carry it to England, piece-meal in one's pocket. The whole Pillar is calculated to weigh 1,110,000 pounds, which would freight a vessel of 550 tons.

The present city of Alexandria is inclosed within solid walls, in some places more than 40, in none less than 20 feet high, flanked with a hundred capacious towers, and forming a circuit of about six miles. Beyond these, are a wide extent of sand and dust, and an accumulation of rubbish, among which may be distinguished broken columns, mutilated statues, and fragments of ancient architecture. The present walls and gates are of Saracenic structure, probably not earlier than the thirteenth century; and many fragments of Alexander's city were employed in this work. Jackals spring over breaches in the wall, in the night, enter the city in quest of prey, and fill it with their cries.

There is nothing beautiful or agreeable in the present Alexandria, except a handsome street of modern houses, where a number of very active and intelligent merchants live upon the miserable remains of that trade which constituted its glory in the first times. The population of Alexandria, before the invasion of the French, did not exceed 6,900 souls, and since that time it is diminished. The houses are white, with flat terrace roofs; the windows are lattice, of wood or iron; the streets are narrow and crowded. The inhabitants run, rather than walk, and bawl, rather than speak. Turks, Arabians, Copts, Syrians, and Jews, use violent gesticulations and modes of expression, though only making a common bargain.

We are not to suppose, that the country around Alexandria was always so sterile as it is now; population produces a sward of grass, which keeps the sand immoveable, till the place is no longer inhabited; canals which attested the power and grandeur of ancient times, converted deserts into gardens and corn fields. The Turkish spirit of devastation has dried up the reservoirs of water, and reconverted fertility to barren sand; but enough remains to show the power of this mighty agent; small ramifications of water still produce barley and leguminous plants in the plains; and trees and shrubs still grow by the side of the canal.

The great pool of water at Alexandria is one of the finest monuments of the middle age, in Egypt. Though one part be in a ruinous state, and the other in need of repairs, it contains a quantity of water sufficient for the consumption of men and animals during two years. The French arrived in Egypt in the month preceding that in which the water was to be renewed, and found it very good and sweet.

Saracen doors of sycamore wood remain unaltered, while the iron work of the doors has yielded to time, and disappeared.

In a mosque without the precincts of Alexandria, built by one of the Califs, was a large sarcophagus of black marble, spotted with green, yellow, and a reddish colour. It would be an oblong square, but that it is rounded at one of the ends. It has no lid, is covered with small hieroglyphical characters, within and without, and has served the Mohammedans for their ablutions. This sarcophagus is now in the British Museum.

Alexandria is placed between the Mediterranean sea on one side and a sea of sand on the other, and in order to arrive at other lands, one must trust the waves or encounter the desert; most travellers choose the latter, in their way to Rosetta, which is called a journey of twelve hours. About 12 miles from Alexandria, close on the shore and partly in the water, are the magnificent ruins of Canopus, a city founded by the Greeks. Broken columns, blocks of granite, a mutilated colossal statue of a woman, fluted all its length, the hind part of a sphynx; such are the remains of a city once embellished with the most superb inventions of art, and watered by one of the branches of the Nile. The river has retreated; the plains are desert; not a particle of the monuments has preserved its place or its position. The town is now Aboukir, famous for the victory of Nelson near its shore; its governor is a barber; his deputy a fisherman; and the French Resident is a Jew, with a salary of three-pence half-penny a day.

About six miles beyond Aboukir, I arrived at the ferry called Medea, or the passage; and here it is



supposed that the Delta begins, and the danger of being plundered by the Lybian Arabs ends. From Alexandria hither, I saw no vegetable, except some scattered roots of absinthium. From Medea, our road lay through very dry sand, to avoid which I rode in the sea. We then struck off nearly at right angles, and pursued our journey to the East of North. Here eleven small brick towers, placed at proper distances, conducted us through moving sands to Rosetta, which is environed on this side by hills of sand that seem ready to cover it. The Nile bathes its walls on the East, and on the other side of the river is a rich low tract of land, abounding with towns and villages.

Rosetta runs about three miles in length on the Western side of the Nile. The houses are built with dingy red bricks; long streets are formed by a double row of shops; but streets here are not more than two yards wide; and caravanseras afford to the traveller only four bare walls and water. Rosetta is the favourite halting-place of Christians entering Egypt. They draw their breath with an imaginary freedom between the two great sinks of oppression and injustice, Alexandria and Cairo. The insults that Europeans experience at Rosetta are slight; they say, in comparison with those which persecute them at Alexandria, and overwhelm them at Cairo; where Christian and dog are synonymous terms, and the latter is used by a Mohammedan, when he intends no particular affront. It is true that merchants, who trade every day with Christians, are more civilized; but the priests, men of learning, and soldiers, are equally intolerant and rude; and in a public procession which I saw of the different trades of Rosetta, the chief night-man appeared disguised as an European.

The ground about Rosetta is low, and retains long the moisture it imbibes from the overflowing of the Nile. There are many gardens and much verdure in the vicinity of Rosetta; but after the rice is reaped, innumerable crowds of gnats issue from the fields, to suck the blood of man, and bite more fiercely than the musquitoes of South America.

Rats would render Egypt uninhabitable, if men, beasts, and birds, did not hunt them for food; for here men eat rats as well as the birds and beasts; the inundation also destroys great numbers; but notwithstanding all these drawbacks, such innumerable multitudes issue from the moistened soil, as soon as the Nile has retired, that the Egyptians believe they are the offspring of the earth; and many of them seriously affirm that they have seen the unfinished creature, one half flesh, and the other still mud.

In the time of the Emperor Selim, the guns of the fortress of Rosetta commanded the sea; they are now at the distance of three miles from it, and the intermediate space is covered with forests of palm trees, and different fruits and vegetables. The waves of the Nile rolling to, and the wind blowing from the North, create, first, a sand bank, then an island, then join it to the main land. This new made ground first produces three or four kinds of sea-weeds. Their decay furnishes a manure which favours the vegetation of reeds. These give a greater elevation and a greater solidity to the soil; the date tree appears, and by its shade prevents the sudden evaporation of the moisture, and renders the earth productive.

At Rosetta I paid a visit to the Greek Patriarch of Alexandria, from whom I received all the honours bestowed on such an occasion. First, a servant



brings a lighted pipe. Then a saucer of sweetmeats is handed about, and a little, in a small spoon, given to every person. Then coffee is served; after which the servants bring to every one a bason of sherbet, with a handkerchief by way of napkin to wipe with, after he has drunk. When it is time to take leave, rose-water is brought, and sprinkled on the hands of the guest, who rubs his face with them. This is followed by incense, the smoke of which the guest receives by leaning his head forward, and holding out his garment on each side. This last compliment is a mark of particular respect. In general, the rose-water is ordered when the master thinks it time that the visit should end; but when the visitor is a superior, the time of his departure is indicated by himself. In these visits every thing is performed with the greatest regularity, and in the most profound silence; the slaves, or servants standing at the bottom of the room, their hands joined before them, watching every motion of their master, who commands them by signs.

I was afterwards at a public entertainment given by a village above Rosetta. The repast consisted of large loaves; immense dishes of rice, either boiled in milk, or rich gravy soup; halves of sheep, and quarters of veal roasted; heads of different animals, boiled; highly seasoned ragouts; vegetables, jellies, sweetmeats, creams, and honey in the comb. All these dainties were crowded together on a carpet, spread on the floor. Water was served in a pot. The chief man of the village, who did the honours of the repast, took the first draught of water, and was the first to taste the different dishes. The hands and lips of the company, during dinner, were wiped with a slice of bread. Napkins were brought after

dinner, when each person washed his hands ; he was then sprinkled with rose-water, and pipes and coffee were produced. When our repast was ended, our places were occupied by persons of a second class, who were soon succeeded by others. From a motive of religion, a poor beggar was admitted ; next came the attendants ; and lastly, all who chose to partake ; till nothing was left. It was impossible not to be struck with the frank hospitality of our entertainers, and the temperance of the guests, who, notwithstanding there was so great a variety of dishes, did not remain more than ten minutes at table.

At Rosetta, I visited the baths. I entered a large saloon, where people were lying in bed, or rising from bed after bathing. From hence I went through narrow passages, each becoming gradually warmer than the last, till the steam and heat were almost insupportable, when I arrived at the room in which were the baths. Numbers of persons were there, some in the bath, others being rubbed all over by the attendants, who wear gloves stuffed with cotton. I had read much of the luxury of these Eastern baths ; but having, myself no desire to try the luxury of being immersed in scalding water, of being kneaded like dough, and having every joint distended and snapped, I confess I did not bathe. The floors were composed of beautiful mosaic pavement ; but the heat combined with various ill smells, was so oppressive, that I wondered any person could remain five minutes in the place.

There is in Egypt a numerous sect called Saadis, from Saadi, a Syrian saint, who being sent one day for a bundle of sticks, and not being able to find a band to tie it, took up a few serpents, and twisting

them together, bound up his sticks with this living rope. Every year the Saadis celebrate the festival of their founder by walking in procession through the streets; each holding in his hand a living serpent, and biting and swallowing pieces of it with frightful grimaces and contortions. As I had not an opportunity of seeing this ceremony, I procured, by means of money, a confirmation of the fact in my own apartment at Rosetta.

A Saadi came, accompanied by a priest of his sect, who carried in his bosom a large serpent, of a dusky green and copper colour, which he was continually handling, and after having recited a prayer, he delivered it to the Saadi. I observed that the teeth of the reptile had been extracted: it was however very lively.

With a vigorous hand the Saadi seized the serpent, which twisted itself round his naked arm. He began to appear agitated; his eyes rolled; he uttered terrible cries; he bit the animal on the head, and tore off a piece, which I saw him chew and swallow. On this, his howlings were redoubled; his limbs writhed; his countenance displayed the features of madness, and his distended mouth was filled with foam. Every now and then, he devoured a fresh piece of the serpent. Three men endeavoured to hold him; but he dragged them all three round the room, throwing his arms about with violence, on all sides, and striking every thing within their reach. I clung to the wall to avoid him, and wished the madman far away.

At length, the priest took the serpent from him, and grasping him in his arms, stroked him gently down the back, lifted him from the ground, and recited some prayers. By degrees his agitation dimi-

nished, and then subsided into a state of complete lassitude, which continued a short time. I entertain no doubt of the knavery of the priest, and the sincerity of the serpent-eater. The priest pretends to blow his spirit into the Saadi before he delivers the reptile.

Two of these performers were introduced to Buonaparte, in the palace which he inhabited at Cairo. "Can you tell me," said he, "whether there are any serpents in this palace? and if there are, can you oblige them to come out from their retreats?" They answered both questions in the affirmative; and, searching all the rooms, they declared that there was a serpent in the house. They then renewed their search, to discover where he was hidden, made some convulsions in passing before a certain jar, and declared that the animal was there. There, indeed, he was found; and Buonaparte and a gentleman who was with him looked at each other, and acknowledged that the trick was adroitly performed. The teeth of this serpent had not been extracted; but while the Saadi threatened and exasperated the reptile with one hand, he held it on the back of the head with the other. Though the gentleman who attended Buonaparte had not been initiated, he performed this part of the miracle himself, to the great indignation of the followers of Saint Saadi.

The cerastes, or horned viper, is generally from thirteen to fourteen inches in length; its head is triangular and very flat. In the upper jaw it has two canine teeth, hollow and crooked, from which it sheds its poison. This is very copious for so small a creature, being fully as large as a drop of laudanum from a phial. I have seen at Cairo a man take a cerastes, with his naked hand, from a number of



others lying at the bottom of a tub, put it on his bare head, cover it with his cap; then take it out, put it in his breast, and tie it about his neck like a necklace. I have seen it then bite a hen, which has died in a few minutes; and to complete the experiment, the man has taken the cerastes by the neck, and, beginning at the tail, has eaten it up, as one would do a carrot.

Of the lizard kind, the warral is so docile, and appears to be so sensible of music, that I have seen several of them keeping exact time with the der-vishes, in their circular motions; running and turning over their heads and arms when they turned, and stopping when they stopped.

At Rosetta I amused myself with discriminating the various inhabitants of Egypt. I fancied I could distinguish in the Copts, who are the original inhabitants of the country, a description of swarthy Nubians, with flat foreheads, eyes half closed, and raised up at the angles, high cheek bones, a broad, flat, and short nose, a large flattened mouth, placed at a considerable distance from the nose, thick lips, little beard, a shapeless body, crooked legs, and long flat toes. Ignorance, drunkenness, cunning, and finesse, are the moral qualities by which these ancient possessors of Egypt are characterized.

After the Copts, come the Arabs, the most numerous of the inhabitants of modern Egypt. They are lively, and have a penetrating physiognomy.

Their eyes, which are sunk in, and over-arched, are replete with vivacity and character. Their beard is short, and hanging in filaments; their lips are thin and open, displaying fine teeth; their arms are fleshy. They are more active than handsome, and more muscular than well-shaped.

Three classes of these people, are, however, to be distinguished. First, the Arab shepherd, who resembles the description I have given. Next, the Bedouin Arab, on whom a more exalted independence, and the state of warfare in which he lives, have bestowed a greater degree of ferocity. Lastly, the Arab cultivator, the most degraded of the three, in consequence of the state of bondage in which he is held, the most varied in person and character, and the most corrupted. The two latter classes are sprung from the preceding one, that of the Arab shepherd.

The Turks are more dignified, and their shape is more delicate. Their thick eye-lids allow but little expression to the eyes; the nose is thick; the mouth and lips handsome; the beard long and bushy; the complexion less swarthy, and the neck plump. Their gestures are dull and heavy, and their gait solemn.

The Jews are in Egypt what they are every where: hated, without being dreaded; despised and persecuted, without being expelled; plundering others, without becoming rich themselves; and useful to others, without any incentive but their own interest. Whether their proximity to their own country may have better preserved their characteristic features here, than elsewhere, I know not; but it is certain that those among them who are young and handsome bear a strong resemblance to the head which Painting has handed down to us of Jesus Christ.

The distinguishing marks of another race of men, who are very numerous in Egypt, are strongly delineated. These are the Barabras, or people from Nubia. Nature, in an economical mood, has denied them every superfluity. They have neither flesh nor fat, but simply nerves, muscles, and tendons, of

great elasticity, but not great vigour. They perform by activity and address what others effect by strength. Their skin is of a shining jetty black, exactly similar to the appearance of the antique bronzes. They have not the smallest resemblance to the Negroes of the western part of Africa. Their eyes are deep set and sparkling, with the eye-brows hanging over. The nose is pointed, the nostrils large, the mouth wide, the lips of a moderate thickness, and the hair and beard in small quantity, and hanging in little locks. They are wrinkled betimes; but this, and the whiteness of their beard, are the only indications of age observable among them; every part of the body remaining slender and muscular as in their youth, and their limbs retaining their agility to the last. Their physiognomy is cheerful, and they are lively and well disposed. Such as are domestics are faithful to their masters, and much attached to them. Many are employed to guard magazines and stores. They are clad in a piece of white woollen cloth. They gain but little, and subsist upon less.

The French officers who were prisoners among the Bedouin Arabs, considered the hardships they suffered during their captivity, rather as the consequence of the mode of living of these people, than as the result of their barbarity. The labour required of them was neither cruel nor excessive, having only to attend on the women, and to load and drive the asses and camels. At that time the Arabs were obliged to remove continually; the camp equipage was kept packed up, and less than a quarter of an hour was sufficient to set the cavalcade in motion. This equipage consisted of a mill to grind the corn and coffee, a round iron plate on which to bake flat cakes, a large coffee pot and a small



one, a few goat-skins to hold water, a few sacks of corn, and the tent cloth, in which all these articles were wrapped up. A handful of roasted corn, and a dozen dates, was the customary ration on days of marching, with a small allowance of water, which, on account of its scarcity, had been applied to other purposes before it was used as a beverage. These officers, however, experienced no ill treatment, and harboured no resentment against the Bedouins, whose wretched condition they had only shared.

A French officer had been several months a prisoner with an Arab Sheik, when the camp was surprised in the night by a body of French cavalry, and plundered of every thing, the Sheik himself having barely time to escape. On the following day he produced a cake which he had carried with him, and, presenting the half of it to his prisoner, he said, "I do not know when we shall have any more food, but it shall not be said that I refused to share my last morsel with one whom I look upon as my friend."

One circumstance happened, however, which places the Arab character in a different point of view. A French officer was taken prisoner by the Arabs, in crossing a ditch, at a very small distance from the army. A price was demanded for his ransom; the captors disputed respecting their several shares, and, to end the contest, they blew out his brains.

The Turk is always smoaking. He sits on his sofa, or in the shade, and slowly washes down every four or five whiffs of tobacco with a gulp of coffee. The tube of his pipe is long, and made of the rarest and sweetest scented wood; the top is frequently enriched with precious stones; the part which goes into the mouth is of yellow amber; the cup is of fine

baked clay. The purse that contains the tobacco is of silk, richly embroidered, and hangs always at his girdle. The tobacco used by the Turks is mild, and never occasions them to spit, which would be looked upon as an indecency in the presence of persons entitled to respect. Of coffee, forty berries make one cup, and their cups are extremely small. The coffee is boiled three times successively, drawing it off the fire between each time, and then poured out.

The Turk seems to meditate, and thinks of nothing. He never stirs from one place to another without some object to put him in motion, and the moment he has attained his object he sits down. To go out and return, without any apparent inducement, he considers as an act of folly. It is only those people who think, that require to have the operations of the mind relieved by those of the body.

All the customs of the Turks seem to invite to repose. Their divans, which are contrived for a recumbent posture, and from which it requires an effort to rise; their long garments, which impede walking; their gloves, which stretch nearly eight inches beyond the fingers; their turban, which prevents their head from stooping; their pipe, which lulls them with its smoak; conspire to destroy activity and imagination. Even those persons who are obliged to work for a livelihood dislike every occupation that keeps them standing: the joiner, carpenter, blacksmith, farrier, all work sitting, and the mason raises a minaret in the same attitude.

The Jews are obliged to be distinguished by their head-dress, their shoes, and the tufts of hair left growing by their ears. They suffer loads of petty persecutions with insensibility, if there be left them any means of advancing their interest. They do

not rob with manly intrepidity and open violence; but they are dextrous, sly, and low deceivers.

The Egyptian women of the common class conceal their faces under a black cloth veil, in which two holes are cut for the eyes; and take greater pains to hide the nose and mouth, than any other part of their persons. Their dress, particularly in the country, consists only of a kind of large tunic, open from the arm-pits downwards, on each side, with very wide sleeves; and they discover, occasionally, fine slender limbs. Their complexion is of a dusky brown. They walk with great ease and security, and carry their burdens with some degree of elegance.

Of the better sort of females, I have seen but two. The first was the wife of a rich merchant, to whom I was introduced by her husband. She was fair, and her beauty was accompanied by a soft tinge of melancholy, which I thought was assumed to impress me with the idea that she was superior to the magnificence that covered and surrounded her. Her hands were uncommonly delicate and beautiful. The other lady was a native of Egypt, and married to a Frank, or European. She was handsome, good-natured, ingenuous, of engaging manners, but not very discreet.

Large black eyes are a distinguishing mark of beauty; and to make them appear larger and blacker, the ladies of Egypt tinge the eye-brows and eye-lashes, and mark the corners of the eye with black lead, reduced to a subtil powder, and prepared with some oily and odoriferous substance. If large black eyes be essential to female beauty, red fingers and nails are not less so. These, as well as the soles of the feet, are dyed with henna. The powder of the dried leaves is made into a paste with water, and

rubbed upon the parts intended to be coloured; they are then wrapped in linen, and at the end of two or three hours the colour is sufficiently impressed upon the skin. The application is renewed about once a fortnight, except upon the nails, where the dye remains much longer, though women wash both hands and feet, several times a day, with soap and lukewarm water. The fingers are wrapped round at equal distances with thread, to prevent the dye from taking effect; so that when the operation is finished, they are marked to the nails with rings of red. It should seem that the ancient Egyptians dyed their nails; as those of the mummies are commonly of a reddish hue. The flowers of the henna are remarkably fragrant, but when brought very near, they become disagreeable; the colours from the leaves may be varied, from a lively red, to orange colour, or yellow. Great quantities of the shrub grow near Rosetta.

When the eyes and hands are properly coloured, to complete a beauty, she must have a smooth and polished skin, and be as fat as possible.

Dogs are reckoned unclean animals, and have no habitation but the streets, where they are persecuted and held in abhorrence. Aware of the opinions of the Mohammedans concerning them, they are careful not to touch the clothes of the passengers; the Mohammedan, on his part, is equally careful to keep the skirt of his robe out of the way of the dog. Without having any thing committed to their charge, the dogs are the voluntary guards of the city and merchandize. They form themselves into separate tribes, which have hereditary limits that they do not transgress. If one should pass into a different quarter, he would be assaulted by a troop of the canine inhabitants, and would find it difficult to make his retreat.



The Mohammedans are fond of cats, which are not excluded even from the mosques. There are cats in most of the houses of Egypt. In the mansions of the rich, they are seen reposing on the cushions of their masters, who stroke and caress them. It is said that Mohammed was so fond of his cat, that, being called away while she was sleeping on his sleeve, he cut it off, rather than disturb her. I am sorry he did not allow a dog to take possession of his other sleeve.

The horses, the buffaloes, having experienced friendly treatment, are docile and tractable. Man makes of dependent quadrupeds what he pleases ; and the flocks and the camels of a Bedouin repair at night to the tent of their master, knowing that they are a part of his family. I am myself acquainted with a cow, belonging to a poor cottager in my own country, which roams about the highways for food, and when she is satisfied, stands at the door of her mistress, with half her body in the dwelling. She is not permitted to enter wholly ; but I am persuaded that nothing is wanting but an invitation and a lock of hay to induce her to take her place at table.

## CHAPTER II.

### CAIRO.

I HAVE remained ignorant of several things during a great part of my life, because they were too well known to be described. To prevent this circumstance from happening to another, in the present instance, I shall observe that Egypt is nothing more than the Vale of the Nile. The river runs from South to North, and annually overflows its banks. As far as this inundation reaches, or can be carried, the soil is a fat black mould, which ordinarily yields from twenty-five to thirty grains of corn for one; in extraordinary seasons fifty for one; and it has been known to yield a hundred and fifty. On the East and West of this supply of water, is a dry sand, known by the general name of Desert; and beyond this are the boundaries of the Vale: a chain of naked rocky mountains on the East, which begins at Cairo, sometimes receding and leaving a plain of about a league in breadth, at others, opposing its barrier to the stream; and a range of barren hills on the West, which rises with less abruptness, and leaves a larger space between its base and the river.

This valley is divided into Lower and Upper Egypt, by an imaginary line drawn across it, above Cairo, the capital. Below Cairo, the river divides into two streams; the Western branch entering the Mediterranean Sea at Rosetta, and the Eastern at Damietta; and the two branches diverging from each other as they run, leave a space of about seventy

miles between the two mouths; but this is a road seldom travelled, on account of the robbers with which the country is infested. The land thus inclosed between the two branches of the river and the sea, forms a vast triangular plain called the Delta. It is sprinkled with innumerable towns and villages, which are built upon small eminences that raise them above the inundation.

In few words, Egypt is a flat plain, intersected by a river and canals; it is under water during three months; verdant and boggy for three others; and dusty and full of cracks the remainder of the year. On this surface are a number of brick and mud-walled villages; half-naked and sun-burnt peasants; buffaloes and camels; sycamore and date trees thinly scattered; lakes, cultivated fields, and vacant grounds of considerable extent. And, over all, a burning sun darting his rays from an azure sky without clouds, and winds constantly blowing, though not always with the same strength.

The Nile when free from inundation is no where more than 700, or less than 100 yards in breadth. Its depth is from one yard to eight.

Hoar frosts and ice are unknown in Egypt.

Great quantities of rice are raised in the Delta. Banks are raised round the rice fields, to retain the water of the inundation, and aqueducts are formed to supply them with more; as it is necessary to the thriving of the plant that its root be continually soaked in water during a certain time. Rice is six months in the ground before it reaches maturity. It is separated from the stalk by a machine with three rows of small wheels of solid iron, which is drawn by two oxen, in a circular direction, over a pile of rice. The grain is then spread to dry, and



turned by men, who walk by the side of each other ; each turning it over with one foot as he walks. It is then stripped of its husk by a mill, winnowed, whitened, salted, and carried to market.

In years of a plentiful inundation, the proprietor of rice grounds obtains a profit of fifty per cent. As soon as the rice is reaped, the husbandman scatters on the surface of the ground the seed of a beautiful kind of trefoil which is called barsim. The soil needs neither ploughing nor digging; being still humid enough for the seed to sink to a sufficient depth. This trefoil yields three successive crops, before it again gives place to the rice. Barsim, green, or dried, is the most common and the most succulent food of domestic animals.

The houses of an Egyptian village are built of mud, even the roof, and they resemble an oven in shape. Within, is only one apartment, generally about ten feet square. The door does not admit of a man's entering upright ; but, as the bottom is dug about two feet lower than the surface of the ground, an erect posture is possible, when in the room. A mat, some large cans to hold water, which it is always the business of the woman to fetch, a drinking pitcher, a rice pan, and a coffee pot, are all the utensils. Yet in these huts the people are not secure from oppression. If a man be suspected of having money, on the information of a spy, or an enemy, he is summoned before the Bey; a sum is demanded, and, if he deny that he possesses it, he is thrown upon his back, and receives two or three hundred blows on the soles of his feet.

All the villages are surrounded with high mud walls, flanked with small towers of the same material, to protect them from the Bedouins. The corn of

each village is placed in a magazine without the walls ; each individual making his own stack, and preserving a path round it. Men, attended by dogs, guard this valuable deposit during the night.

The peasants of Egypt are labourers, to whom no more is left than what is barely sufficient to sustain life. The rice and wheat they gather are carried to the table of their masters, and nothing is reserved for themselves but dora, or Indian millet, of which they make a bread without leaven, and bake it over a fire made of the dung of animals. This, with water and raw onions, makes their ordinary food ; a little cheese, sour milk, honey, or a few dates, are their luxuries. Their clothing is a shirt of blue linen, and a clumsy black cloak, and their head-dress a cloth cap, with a roll of red woollen round it.

It is unlawful to eat or drink, during the month of the Ramadan, from the rising to the setting of the sun. The poor man labours all day without food, and eats and sleeps at night. The rich man, in every place, can either elude the laws, or render them less oppressive : he sleeps during the day, when he may not eat, and feasts and revels through the night. As soon as the sun is set, dancing, music, and spectacles appear in the streets, and atone for the abstinence of the day.

At Rosetta I embarked on the Nile for Cairo ; and I counted fifteen villages on the Western side of the river, in the space of the first twelve miles : the country on the Eastern side appeared an uncultivated morass. By the time I arrived at Terané, I had counted more than a hundred villages, on both sides of the Nile, and the country was a clean, well-cultivated, unbounded plain.

Desûk, a large village on the East of the Nile, has

a mosque in which two hundred thousand persons pay their devotions twice a year. The greatest miracle performed by Ibrahim, the patron saint, is, that he suspends the jealousy of the Mohammedans during the time his festival lasts, and allows the women a liberty by which they are said to profit to the fullest extent.

Near thirty British soldiers were drowned by bathing in the Nile, on their way to Cairo.

Cairo is situated on the East of the Nile, and at a small distance from it; the two suburbs of Bûlak and Misr el Attike form two points of contact with the river; the former being the port for Lower Egypt, the latter for Upper. Boats crowd the river, and fertile gardens are interspersed between the houses, and between the suburbs and the city.

Cairo is nine miles in circumference. Within this space are contained a number of gardens, courts, vacant grounds, and ruins. The gates of the city are numerous; two of these, at the northern extremity, are splendid monuments of Saracenic architecture; of the walls, only fragments remain. Cairo, or more properly speaking, Kahira, was founded in the year 952.

The streets of Cairo are unpaved and narrow; but inconveniences would attend their being wider. Two long streets run through the city parallel with the river. The greater number of houses are built with stone, and are two, or sometimes three, stories high. The ground floor is either a shop, or has no windows to the street; the upper stories have latticed windows; a few have paper windows, and some of the rich have windows of glass. There are more than three hundred mosques in Cairo, and there are large and sumptuous reservoirs in various parts of the city, where water is given to passengers.

The Canal which goes through the city from North to South is, for the greater part of the year, a public receptacle of all kinds of filth and offal ; before the rise of the Nile, it is cleaned out, and becomes a street ; and lastly, being filled with the increase of the river, it is a canal, covered with boats. It is said to be the work of the Pharaohs, and according to the Arabian historians, its bed is cased with marble. Whatever be the bed, the covering is a thick coat of mud, the work of ages. The pleasure boats of the great, which are used both on the Nile and the canal, on the increase of the river, are light and elegant, and have from four to eight rowers each. Those for the women are covered with wainscot ; those for the men are covered at top, and open, or latticed on the sides.

The general rise of the Nile remains the same as in ancient times, about twenty-four feet. When it has attained this height, the people cry, "Wafaa Allah !" God has given enough. The bank of the canal is then broken down, and the water is admitted into the city of Cairo. The rise is from the end of June to the beginning of September. The motion of the Nile does not exceed three miles an hour. Though the water is muddy, it is not unwholesome. The soil near the river is a pure black mould, free from stones, of a very tenacious and unctuous nature.

The squares are vast irregular places, and are most of them large lakes during the inundation of the Nile ; and first stinking marshes, and then fields or gardens, when the river has retired to its bed. Crowds of men, of different nations, post through the streets, jostle one another, and dispute the way with the horse of the Mamelûk, the mule of the man

of law, the camels which supply the place of carts, and the asses which serve instead of hackney coaches. The terraces of the houses are covered with kites and crows, whose screams and croakings mingle with the tumult of the populace. The inhabitants are estimated at three hundred thousand.

All the streets of Cairo have gates, which are shut at night; but a porter attends to open them to those who appear with a light in their hand, and can give a satisfactory reason for desiring to pass.

The houses of the rich are commonly surrounded by a court. Within the house, is a large hall, as lofty as the building, paved with marble, and having in the centre a marble bason of water. On the top is a small dome, opening on the North side with a funnel, into which the wind rushes, and combines with the marble and the water to render the air cool and refreshing. One of our snug brick houses, with red tiles, would be intolerable at Cairo.

The government of Egypt is in the hands of twenty-four Beys, who before their arrival at that dignity, have been the slaves, soldiers, and followers of the preceding Beys, under the title of Mamelûks.

When a Bey dies, the surviving Beys elect another; or rather the most powerful of them, but the number is never complete. The revenue of one of the inferior Beys may be about 300 purses, or 15,000*l.* and that of an opulent Bey from 30,000*l.* to 50,000*l.* The revenue of Mûrad Bey more than doubled the latter sum. Justice is ever open to the influence of gold. Two Syrian Christians, who had successively been farmers of the customs, quarreled. One of them went to the Bey and said, "The city is not wide enough for me and such a one; you must put one of us to death; if you will put him to



death, here are a thousand sequins." The money was accepted, and the obligation instantly performed.

On the marriage of the daughter of Ibrahim Bey, he understood that a company of female singers who had been singing through the day and a great part of the night, in the principal square of the city, had been very successful, and he sent for the leader to his house. She obeyed the summons with alacrity, expecting a handsome gratuity, or, at least, a handsome compliment, on the occasion. His first question was, "How many half sequins did you collect yesterday?" "About ten thousand," she replied. "Pay me eight thousand then," said the Bey, "and I will give you a note for that sum on my secretary." The money was paid, and the woman was turned out of the house, but the note on the secretary was mentioned no more.

Fatmé, the daughter of the famous Ali Bey, and the wife of the magnificent Mûrad, was much respected by all the Beys: even her husband always stood reverently in her presence. When a Bey was appointed to a government, he paid a visit to this old lady, who never failed to give him good counsel. "Do not pillage the people," said she, "they were always spared by my father."

Cairo is well supplied with Romish ecclesiastics; here are Jesuits, Capuchins, Cordeliers, and Fathers and Brothers of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. These monks are all eager to make proselytes, and sometimes succeed so far as to convert some schismatic Christian of the East. The government tolerates these modern apostles, because a quarrel generally ensues between the convert and the society he has left, and the Bey finds it necessary to fine both parties: sometimes he examines the

affair to the bottom, and exacts a considerable sum from the monks.

One of the Beys acquires the title of Sheik el Belled, Chief of the City; in other words, Tyrant without controul. The Beys harass the governors of provinces and towns with their demands, and these in their turn oppress the country by their exactions; the profits of agriculture are brought to Cairo to feed the fury and avarice of the Beys; and the husbandman ceases to till the ground.

The streets of Cairo have frequently been the theatre of bloody contests between rival Beys and their partizans, while the inhabitants, certain of experiencing the same vexations, whoever might be the conqueror, took no part in the dispute. The tradesman did not quit his shop, and the mechanic worked coolly at his door, not caring which side obtained the victory; and the contending parties, certain that the people would remain neuter, did not molest them.

The splendor and prodigality of those in power is contrasted with the frightful poverty of the body of the people. The intermediate class carefully conceal acquired wealth, and only use it clandestinely. The Beys are equally ignorant, fanatic, and superstitious with the dregs of the people; not one of either can read or write.

A strong resemblance may be traced between the features of the modern Copts, and those of the ancient mummies, statues, and paintings of the Egyptians; the Coptic language is forgotten. The Copts are Christians, but they have adopted many of the Mohammedan customs. They are an acute, subtil, and industrious people. The women have interesting features, large black eyes, and a genteel form.

Hired servants of the great have their food provided by their master, receive clothes occasionally, and get what they can by extortion ; for which the lowest menial has some opportunity.

Europeans are not allowed to wear the dress of the Mohammedans without some mark to point them out to infamy. They are obliged to wear a high hairy cap, which exposes them to inevitable insults, when they venture out of the quarter of the city assigned to them. Mounted on an ass, the Frank is obliged to look before and behind him ; and if a Mamelûk, a priest, or a man in office pass him, he alights and stands still, with his right hand placed on his breast, till the haughty Mohammedan be gone by, and then mounts to repeat the same ceremony in a few minutes. If accident, or attention to his own affairs, make him regardless, a set of domestics, armed with stout sticks six feet long, and with sleeves tucked up to the arm-pits, attend men in power, and recal the attention of the Frank to this duty by smart blows. One French merchant, whom I knew at Cairo, had his leg broken in this manner ; and another, whom I knew likewise, his neck.

The horses of the Mamelûks are of the finest Arabian breed, and are often purchased at the price of 150*l.* or 200*l.* sterling. The price of an Arabian horse whose pedigree was attested, was from 500*l.* to 800*l.* to the French ; and there were very few seen during their stay in Egypt. The mouths of the horses of the Mamelûks are not filled with iron : a small simple bit, and a single rein of light Morocco leather, are sufficient to guide them at the rider's pleasure. The bows of the saddle are so elevated, that the horseman is supported up to the middle, before and behind.

The Egyptian horses are as beautiful as the Arabian; but they are inferior in strength. They are often sixteen hands high, and shaped like an antelope, and the stateliness of their step is admirable. They are wonderfully tractable, and do not seem to know that they can kick. They walk well, never trot, gallop with great speed, and stop short in a moment. The great men keep from fifty to two hundred horses each.

A horse is never allowed to enter a stable till he be grown cool, and have recovered his breath: till then, he is walked about. In the stable his head is at liberty, and without any kind of halter. His shoes are light, and do not turn down at the ends.

To try the tempered blades of Damascus, a large pillow stuffed with feathers is set on a prop, about the height of a man, without any thing to keep it steady, so that the slightest touch would throw it down; and this the sword, to be reputed of excellent quality, must cut in two at a single stroke.

Badly fed, worse attended, oppressed by heavy burdens, and ill treated by blows, the ass of our country is a wretched slave. He is made the emblem of dulness and stupidity, though he is in reality gentle, patient, and temperate. The asses of Egypt have vigour and beauty; their foot is sure, their step light, and their paces are quick and easy. More hardy than horses, and less difficult with regard to the quality and quantity of their food, they are preferred for long journies across the deserts.

In the principal streets and squares of Cairo, asses stand for hire, ready bridled and saddled; and the person who lets one, accompanies his ass, running behind to goad him on, and crying out to those on foot to make way. When the rider alights, he

draws the rein tight, and fastens it to a ring on the fore part of the saddle, which confining the head of the beast, is sufficient to make him remain quietly in his place. It is said there are 40,000 asses kept in Cairo. Asses in Egypt are regularly rubbed down and washed, like horses.

Goats are driven about the streets of Cairo every morning in small flocks, and people see the milk drawn from them, as they wish to purchase it.

Dogs reside in the streets of Cairo, and know their own boundaries, as at Rosetta. They bark at an enemy throughout the whole of their division; when they give him up to the howlings of those who come to receive him. Lice are so common that even the Beys make no scruple of taking them from their persons in public; and fleas are so numerous that the shirts of the British officers, were, in twelve hours, covered with a thousand spots.

Egypt is the country of the one-eyed and the blind. Of a hundred persons whom I have met in the streets of Cairo, twenty have been quite blind, ten wanting an eye, and twenty have had their eyes red or ble-mished. During the stay of the English army in Egypt, 160 soldiers became totally blind, and 200 irrecoverably lost one eye. This is occasioned by the air being impregnated with nitrous particles, and by the acrid and burning dust. The indifference with which the people support this dreadful calamity is not less astonishing.

The plague never originates in Egypt; but may always be traced, immediately, or remotely, to Constantinople. Experience, the most indisputable of all evidences, attests the salubrity of the air of Egypt except as it regards the eyes.

The Almee, or dancing girls, are always attended



by an old man and woman, who play on musical instruments, and superintend the conduct of the girls, taking care that they are chaste, unless they receive a sufficient sum for being otherwise. The forms of the Almee are elegant; their faces are expressive, but not beautiful; I have seen a couple of these ladies swallow large glasses of brandy as if it had been lemonade.

There are story-tellers, who, with wonderful readiness, go through innumerable varieties of adventures resembling the Thousand and One Nights. There are wits, who contend against each other in similitudes. "Let us wrestle in similies," says the challenger. "What is your similitude?" demands the other. "You are like the city ass, look sleek, and carry dung." Some of these unexpected similies are laughable, and some have real wit. A prize is given to him who holds out the longest. On the much-frequented road from Cairo to Boulack, half naked poets, their heads covered with a rush cap, compose extempore verses in honour of each passenger, whom they suppose likely to give them a little money. Sometimes two of these form a dialogue on the spot, upon the virtues of a man unknown and unseen before. Their eulogies consist of common-place phrases, uttered with great volubility.

On a marriage at Cairo, the bride, completely veiled, and supported by two women, walks under a canopy to the house of the bridegroom. The apartments of the women are furnished with the finest and most costly articles; those of the men in a plain style of neatness. The Mamelúks breakfast before sun-rise, make their second meal at ten, and third about five in the afternoon. A large dish of pilau, a soup made with barley or rice and goat's

flesh, is placed in the middle, and small dishes of meat, fish, and fowls, surround it. The meat is cut small before it is dressed; the beverage is water, and coffee is served immediately after. Fire is only employed in cookery; the effects of cold being sufficiently obviated by warmer cloathing.

The common bread is unleavened, and in the form of a little flat cake; it is slightly baked, and the crust is soft, whence it is heavy and hard of digestion. In cities, a finer bread is made, which is either covered with carraway seeds, that give it a slight aromatic taste; or sprinkled with sesamum, an oily grain, that gives it the flavour of a hazle nut. These two are considered as delicacies.

Dates are pounded and kneaded into solid cakes, for the use of caravans, travelling through the deserts. Pieces of these, diluted in water, afford nutritious food, and a refreshing beverage. These masses are so hard that they must be cut with a hatchet.

The onions of Egypt, which were one of the causes of the regret of the Children of Israel on quitting that country, are milder than those of Europe; neither stinging the mouth with their pungent taste, nor making the eyes water when they are cut. They are sold in the streets of Cairo, raw, and dressed, for the merest trifle; and the labourer who earns about seven farthings a day, buys as much bread, and as many onions as he can eat, and has something to spare.

Bouza, an intoxicating fermented liquor, made of dried, or parched barley, is much drunk by the common people.

In Cairo, Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, are the days of the public divan, and the general days of

business. On Fridays they go to their mosques at noon; but though it is their day of devotion, they never abstain from business. The other three days of the week they call Benish days, from the garment of that name, which is not a habit of ceremony. On these days they go out early in a morning, with their slaves, to public places called Meidans, at some distance from the city, where there is a sort of open summer houses, and amuse themselves with seeing their slaves ride, shoot, and throw the javelin, while they themselves are smoking and drinking coffee. When they are at home, they pass the time from 12 o'clock till 4 in the women's apartment, and from the time they go to supper till the next morning. The wife who owns the apartment in which the husband chooses to dine, prepares the dinner, or directs and inspects it; but never eats with him, having her own provisions served, perhaps at the same time, in another room. A great man, who has four wives, has five kitchens, one for each, managed by her own slaves or servants, and a large one for himself when he does not dine in the harem, and for the servants and slaves of the family. When a man is in his harem, particularly if he be a great man, it must be business of extraordinary importance that can call him out.

The seclusion of women, originating in the desire of man to guard the creature he considered as his property, has by long habit become a part of decency; and so far from complaining of it as an injury, women are tenacious of it as a mark of respect. "I consented to become your wife," said a woman to her husband, in my hearing, "that I might remain in private in my own family; not to be sent to market, to meet the eyes of all the world!"

Both Turks and Egyptians are frugal in their manner of living ; the latter seldom eat meat. The great men have fifty or sixty slaves, and as large a number of servants, besides dependents ; yet the expence of their table is small : they are at a great expence, however, in clothing their slaves.

The coffee-houses at Cairo are not frequented by the best company ; but those of a middle rank, who have nothing to do, frequently pass whole days in them, and send for provisions. In some coffee-houses, there is music at certain hours, in others, a man recites some history, or Arabian tale.

The inhabitants of this country build as little as possible, and repair less. If a wall threaten to come down, they prop it up ; if it fall in, it only makes the fewer rooms in the house, and they quietly arrange their carpets by the side of the ruins ; if, at last, the house fall altogether, they either abandon the spot, or they remove the rubbish to as small a distance as possible. This is the cause that in almost every town in Egypt, and particularly in Cairo, the traveller sees heaps of rubbish scattered about, for which he cannot account.

Some trace of the care of the ancient Egyptians in the preparation of the dead remains in this country. They use various methods to free a corpse from all impurities ; and then carry it on a bier, head-foremost, to the place of interment, preceded by priests, reciting passages of the Koran, and followed by women, who are hired to shed tears and utter lamentations. A small pillar of stone, with a turban on the top, points out the place where the head reposes ; and to this mark the friends of the deceased repair every Friday, to repeat their sorrows.

The repositories of the dead are not mingled with



the habitations of the living ; but are large separate inclosures, without the limits of the town. The cemetery of the Mamelûks is an example of Arabian elegance. On quitting the heaps of rubbish which environ Cairo, the stranger is astonished to see another town, built wholly of white marble, where edifices raised on columns, and terminated by domes, or by painted, carved, and gilt palanquins, form a striking picture.

Every trade and profession at Cairo has its Sheik, or leader.

There is at Cairo a great manufacture of linen cloth, made of the fine flax of Egypt.

The Egyptians use the dung of their domestic animals for fuel, and little girls go about the streets and highways, gathering dung for this purpose. It is mixed with chopped straw, and the compound is made into cakes, which are dried in the sun, and burnt by the poorer sort of people, whose vaulted huts have no chimnies. A soot, very rich in salts, is thus produced, which fastens to the top of the room : it is afterwards put into bottles, and sublimated by heat ; and the substance in the neck of the bottles is sal ammoniac.

Water is drawn out of the river for the purposes of agriculture, either with buckets, or by the Persian wheel, and lodged in capacious cisterns. Pulse, or fruits, are generally planted in rills, and when they require water, the plugs in the bottom of the cisterns are struck out, and the water is conducted from one rill to another by the gardener, who stops and diverts the torrent, by turning the earth against it with his foot, and opening a new trench to receive it with his mattock. This method was practised here in the days of Moses, who tells the Children of



Israel that the land whither they are going is not like the land of Egypt which they *watered with their foot*, but that it drinketh water of the rain of heaven.

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### CHAPTER III.

PYRAMIDS, CATACOMBS, HELIOPOLIS, PILGRIMS.

CAN it be imagined that I saw Cairo, so as to describe it minutely, before I had examined the Pyramids of Egypt? No, I saw Cairo first; I love method; and I have described Cairo first; but I hastened to the pyramids on my arrival at that city. The pyramids are twelve miles from Cairo, and on the Western side of the river; I sailed through fields by the trenches of the inundation, and after tacking often through the cultivated country, I landed on the borders of the desert, a mile and a half from the pyramids. These prodigious monuments of human industry are discovered at thirty miles distance: when we stand within three, we imagine ourselves at their feet, and when we reach them, we are lost in wonder that so diminutive a creature as man should have been their architect. These huge and heavy structures, however, attest less the genius of a people than their slavery to their monarch.

The great pyramid of Geeza is 600 feet in height, and the base 700 on every side. The French have ascertained the foundation, which is of solid rock. The stones with which it is built are from five to thirty feet long, and from three to four high: they

have all been laid in mortar, and they are not of marble, but of freestone. The ascent requires resolution and strength, each stone being about four feet high, and receding from that below it about three. The British soldiers continually went up and down these steps, without any accident. The summit of the pyramid is about sixty feet square: Bruce's name, and many others, are carved on the stone, and on this singular platform the French *sçavans* dined. A line stretched from the top to the bottom of the pyramid would touch the angle of every step. It is calculated that the stone contained in this pyramid would build a wall five inches thick, three feet high, and four hundred and fifty miles long.

I ascended a small heap of sand and rubbish, which leads to the opening made in the pyramid. This entrance is on the North side, and about sixty feet from the base. By what indication it was discovered is now unknown, for it is in the third layer of stone from the outside of the pyramid, and must have been concealed by the other two. Here begins the first passage. It is 60 paces in length; but as our steps are obstructed by rubbish, and by sand that is daily drifted in by the North wind, it is very inconvenient to proceed, and the length may perhaps be called 160 feet. The direction of this passage lies towards the centre, and sloping towards the base of the pyramid; at the extremity, two large blocks of granite form a partition to this mysterious passage.

This obstacle appears to have perplexed those who undertook the research of the pyramid. Endeavours have been made to cut a passage through the solid stone; but this having been found impracticable, an entrance has been made by working upwards for 22

feet, by the side of the granite blocks. Here the beginning of the first sloping staircase was discovered. It runs upwards for 120 feet; it is steep and narrow, made of calcareous stone, cemented with mortar: and it is mounted by notches cut in the ground, and by resting the hands against the sides. At the top of this passage is a landing-place about 15 feet square; and within it, just on the right of the entrance, is a perpendicular opening about 24 inches by 18, to which travellers have given the name of the well. From the irregularity of this opening, and from a stone which has been thrown down soon stopping, it has been imagined that this has been an attempt at a search, which has failed. I believe it, but I am not so thoroughly convinced that the attempt might not have succeeded, if it had been pursued. The sepulchres at Thebes have perpendicular openings which lead to vaulted passages beneath; and who shall say that the well of the pyramid of Geeza had not such a purpose? or who shall say that it might not lead to a subterraneous passage, which opened to the light of day at some distance, and formed the secret entrance to, and exit from, the pyramid?

On a level with the landing-place, is a horizontal passage, 170 feet long, running directly to the centre of the pyramid. At the end of this is a room known by the name of the Queen's chamber. It is eighteen feet two inches long, and fifteen feet eight inches wide; the height is uncertain, for the floor has been turned up by the avidity of the searchers for treasure; one of the side walls has been worked into, and the rubbish has been all left on the spot. This chamber is made of fine calcareous stone, neatly put together, and has no ornament, or inscription whatsoever.

Returning from the Queen's chamber to the landing-place of the well, and climbing up a few feet, you come to the bottom of a magnificent passage, immediately over the other, and like that, leading to the centre of the pyramid; but rising on an inclined plane, instead of being horizontal. This grand passage is 180 feet in length, and 6 feet 6 inches in breadth; but in this must be included two parapets, each 19 inches in diameter, and pierced every three feet and a half by oblong holes. The side walls of this passage rise perpendicularly for 12 feet, and then form a sloping roof of an excessively high pitch; not by a regular angle, but by eight successive projections, each 6 feet in height, rising above the other, and approaching the corresponding projection on the other side, till the roof is shut in. The centre of the roof is every where 60 feet from that part of the floor immediately under it.

You ascend this passage by means of pretty regular, but modern footings cut in the floor, and, at the top, you find a small platform, in which is a thick block of granite, imbedded in the solid building, that was intended for ever to conceal the entrance into the principal chamber, which is behind it. Avarice conquered, where curiosity might ever have failed; and after mining through 13 feet of solid granite, an entrance was discovered three feet three inches square. This entrance is facing the grand passage, corresponding with the entrance into the Queen's chamber, and about 100 feet above it.

At the further end of the principal chamber, to the right in entering this sanctuary, is a chest, of a single piece of granite, which is all that this prodigious edifice is known to inclose. The chest is 6 feet 11 inches long, 3 feet wide, and three feet 1

inch and a half high : it is fixed so strongly in the floor, that a number of persons who were with me were not able to move it. It formerly had a lid. As no centinel was placed to guard this sarcophagus, many pieces of it were broken and carried off by the English ; and if they had been permanently established in Egypt, I am not certain whether the whole pyramid might not have arrived in England, in the form of remembrances, and presents to friends.

The chamber is of the same material as the chest, half polished, and without cement. Here terminates the interior of this edifice, in which the work of man appears to rival the gigantic forms of nature.

The time of the building of the great pyramid is well authenticated by history. It was erected by Cheops, about 140, or 160 years after the building of Solomon's temple, or 860 years before Christ. It is added, that the building took up twenty years, and that one third of the inhabitants of Egypt were employed, by forced service, in hewing, transporting, and raising the stones.

An Arabian historian acquaints us that this pyramid was opened about a thousand years ago, by the Califal Mamon, and that towards the top was found a chamber, in which was a hollow stone. On this stone was a statue like a man, and within the stone was a man, with a breast-plate of gold set with jewels, and a sword of inestimable value : at his head was a carbuncle as big as an egg, shining like the light of day, and upon him were written characters, which no man understood. Of this history, the time of opening the pyramid, the monarch by whose order it was executed, the figure, and the hollow stone, may be true, and the stone still remains to give evidence in its favour ; the breast-plate, the sword,



and the luminous carbuncle, may very safely be turned over to the Arabian Tales.

There are three pyramids at Geeza, and in the latter part of the eighteenth century, one of the Beys, in search of treasure, attempted to open the smallest, on the same side, and at the same height on which the largest had been opened; but, after forcing out two or three hundred stones, with considerable labour and expence, he relinquished his enterprize.

About two hundred yards from the great pyramid, and to the east of it, is the Sphynx. It is cut out of the solid rock; and the French have uncovered more of the figure than had been seen for centuries before. Though the proportions of the sphynx are colossal, the outline is graceful; the expression of the head is mild and tranquil; the features are feminine and African; the mouth and lips have a softness and delicacy of execution truly admirable; they seem real life and flesh. Art must have been at a high pitch, when a head displaying so much simplicity, and such a character of nature, was formed. The height of the sphynx is 26 feet; but the feet of the figure are still covered with sand: the back seems intended to represent that of a lion; its length is not exactly ascertained, but, from what can be seen, it is probably 60 feet. The circumference of the head is twelve feet; it is hollow within, as is proved by a narrow excavation in the crown of the head which penetrates nine feet deep; how much further it goes is unknown, as the bottom is at present filled with rubbish, but the neck is supposed to be solid. It is imagined that the priests concealed themselves in the head, and delivered their oracles through the mouth of the figure.

The pyramids of Saccara are not ten miles from these of Geeza, yet the common way is to go five miles from Cairo before we cross the Nile, and proceed by the towns of Mohannon and Metrahenny, which last place is only three or four miles from Saccara. Saccara itself is a poor village at the foot of the western hills. Having letters of recommendation to the Sheik of this village, he took me to a causeway thirty-five feet wide, made with large stones, which led by a short ascent to a sandy plain four or five miles in breadth, extending to higher hills; on the brow of a hill the pyramids are built. The three northern ones are three or four miles north of Saccara; the others run as far as eight or nine to the south. The former are never visited by travellers; they appear to be about the size of the pyramids of Geeza.

Most of the pyramids to the south of Saccara are narrower from north to south than from east to west. One of these is called by the Arabs, the pyramid with steps. I computed this to be 300 feet to the north, 275 to the east, and 150 feet high. It is formed of steps, 11 feet broad, and 25 deep. As it is much ruined at the angles, I ascended it at that on the north east, and descended at the north west; it measured at the top 50 feet 6 inches to the north, and 22 feet 6 inches to the east. The outside casing was of hewn stone, twenty rows to each step, each row 1 foot 3 inches in depth. Several pyramids appear to be round at the top.

What the Arabs call the large pyramid to the north, because it is to the north of another nearly as large, is about 700 feet to the north, which is the size of the greatest pyramid at Geeza. It wants 20 feet of this measure to the east; the top is 20 feet

to the North, and 15 to the east; there are 156 steps, from 2 to 3 feet in depth, and about 2 feet in breadth; and the pyramid has about 345 feet of perpendicular height. On the north side, about one third of the way up, is an entrance three feet and a half wide, and rather more than four feet deep. I went into the pyramid by this passage, which is steep, and has holes cut, as rests for the feet: it was with great difficulty we made our way for the last twenty-five feet, the passage being almost filled up with sand: at the end I came into a room  $22\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, and nearly 12 feet wide. At the height of  $10\frac{1}{2}$  feet, a row of stones projects into the room 5 inches on each side; and in the same manner twelve rows project, one above another, so that the top is probably not more than a foot in breadth. On the right of this room, is one that resembles it exactly; and in both, at the further end, in the middle of the fifth and sixth tiers of stone from the top, is a door leading to a small room over each of the others. These upper rooms I did not see, but I was informed by a gentleman who had contrived a ladder by which he ascended to them, that they are of smooth white stone, of excellent workmanship.

About a mile to the south east of this pyramid, is that called by the Arabs, the great pyramid to the south, which is about 600 feet on every side, and 335 in height. This pyramid appears to have been cased all the way up, and is built of very good hewn stone within, as is discoverable in those parts where the facing is broken away. The lower parts are much destroyed on all sides, but not sufficiently so to admit of our ascending to the top; or even to an aperture at the twelfth tier from the ground, which

probably leads to a passage that has not been opened.

The celebrated catacombs or mummy pits of Saccara extend far under ground. The method of descending into these is disagreeable. Arabs are the conductors, and they bring the adventurer to some holes in the earth, down one of which he is let about thirty yards, by means of a rope slung about his body; loose stones from the top and sides, to his great annoyance, descending with him. On reaching the bottom, he is shewn an opening like an oven, which he enters with his legs first, and lying flat upon his face. This passage is about twenty yards in length, totally dark, and so low as not to admit of the smallest bend of the person. When a man has shoved through it, he finds himself in a vaulted room, of which there are great numbers; these allow him to stand upright.

The catacombs have been so often disturbed that nothing has preserved its primitive situation. There are still remaining an infinite number of earthen pots, closed by a strong cement. When one of these is broken, sometimes the bill and bones of the ibis appear; but in general only a lump drops out of what is apparently cinders, but is really the cloth in which the body of the sacred bird was inclosed: the feathers are always perfect.

Little square boxes, painted either with symbolical figures or hieroglyphics, are found in these catacombs, having the figure of a dog, a hawk, or an owl, of solid wood, fixed upon the lid. A person who had been present at the first opening of a vault, informed me that one of these boxes was placed at the foot of each mummy, and that it contained, in miniature, the instruments and utensils which belonged to the trade or occupation of the deceased. These boxes,

and whatever else is of wood in the catacombs, are of sycamore. Behind the boxes, my informer added, were small images of baked earth, painted in different colours, and arranged round the pedestals of the mummy chests, or coffins.

It is now become extremely difficult to procure a mummy ; I was present, however, at the opening of one, the composition of which was as follows.

A coffin made of boards, fastened together with pins, the interstices filled with linen and fine plaster; a face of wood, carved and painted, nailed on the head. Four folds of cloth over the head, the upper one painted blue. Under these, a composition of what appeared to me to be gum, and cloth burnt by the heat of the substance which had been applied to it; this was about half an inch in thickness. Under this was a coat of gum or bitumen about as thick as a wafer; and under that the skin. The hinder part of the head was filled with bitumen, the body having been laid on the back when the bitumen was poured in by the nose. The bitumen had penetrated into the very bone of the skull, particularly into the middle part, which is the most porous.

The body was bound round with a bandage of linen about three quarters of an inch broad; under this were four folds of cloth; under these was a bandage two inches broad, which was followed by eight successive ones of the same breadth; and under all these bandages was a crust of linen about an inch thick, burnt almost to ashes, but adhering together by means of the gummy substance with which it was pervaded, and which had probably reduced it to that state. The bones of the arms were placed across the breast, the hands lying towards the face. From the hips to the feet were eight different



bandages, and under these, linen, an inch thick, consumed, as before, by the heat of the drugs.

Few, or none, of the muscular parts were preserved, except the thighs, and these crumbled to powder on being touched. The head rested on two wooden blocks. The outer bandages of linen did not appear to have been besmeared with gums: upwards of fifty yards of the exterior part was, upon unfolding it, as strong to appearance as if just taken from the loom; yet even this, after having been a few days exposed to the air, was easily rent to pieces.

A more costly coffin than the one I have described was hollowed out of two pieces of wood in the form of the body; in one of which it was placed, and with the other, covered. The outside of the chest was cut into the form of the body when swathed; it was then wrapped in a linen cloth, which was afterwards covered with a thin plaster, and painted with different devices. The bodies, after being embalmed and swathed, were also plastered and painted in the same manner\*.

\* A lady of the highest respectability, and the most undoubted veracity, gave the editor of these Travels the following account of a mummy, said to be the body of Cleopatra.

Being at Antwerp in the year 1772, the lady was told that a merchant of that city, had a large sum of money owing him by another merchant, who, being unable to pay, had absconded, and settled in Egypt. From thence the debtor had sent the creditor, as a present, what he considered as the most valuable thing in the world, the embalmed body of Cleopatra. The merchant was proud of exhibiting so precious a relic; numbers of people went to see it, and this lady among the rest.

The body was lying in a chest or coffin. The face was uncovered, and had never been otherwise. The skin was copper coloured; the flesh was not sunk; the features were handsome. There was no appearance of death having been occasioned by disease or pain; but

The curiosity of travellers is a considerable profit to the Arabs. While a party of English officers, who had been visiting the catacombs, were sitting in the house of the Sheik at Menf, which is within two hundred yards of those ancient receptacles of the dead, some Arabs entered with a basket of rarities for sale. They were carefully covered with a linen cloth ; and when this was removed, the basket was found to contain four human heads, three of which retained their eyes and a beautiful set of teeth ; three arms, with hands ; two legs, with feet ; and one foot separate. On all the hands and feet, the nails were perfect, and the sinews distinct.

Menf is Memphis. The Arabs point it out to this day as the site of the city of the Pharaohs. The pyramids of Geeza and Saccara undoubtedly determine the limits of the ancient capital of Egypt : the former being its necropolis, or city of the dead, on the North, and the latter on the South.

From Cairo I visited the ancient Heliopolis, now called Mattareah, which is little more than three miles East of the Nile. Here I saw the ruins of a

the expression was that of a female in health and asleep. A cap of silver, not solid, but fillagree, or woven, was placed on the head. The lady saw it taken off, and, according to her recollection, there was hair, but not long hair. The body, arms, and legs were swathed all together, and the lady believed that the bandages were painted.

The merchant said, that on some prince, to whom he had shewn it, having expressed a doubt of its being the identical body of Cleopatra, he was so indignant that he had cut through the bandages on the breast, and discovered the puncture made by the asp. True it was that the bandages had been cut ; for the lady saw the incision that had been made, which was about eight or nine inches in length ; and a gentleman who was with her privately put his hand into it, and drew out some dried herbs, which he gave to the lady, and which emitted a strong and lasting perfume.

sphinx, of bright yellow marble, about 22 feet in length, with stones that seemed to have made a part of three others. I also saw an obelisk, of red granite, finely polished, 67 feet 6 inches above the ground, and 6 feet on every side at the base, in excellent preservation, and covered with hieroglyphics. There was doubtless another obelisk to the North of this. The country about Heliopolis is supposed to have been the land of Goshen.

At Cairo I saw the caravan of pilgrims arrive from Mecca. It is well known that Mohammed commanded every one of his followers to perform this pilgrimage once in his life, if possible. Some persons go several times; but they are commonly such as make a profit by trade, or subsist upon alms by the way. There is a saying, “If a man have been once to Mecca, take care of him; if twice, have nothing to do with him; and if three times, remove out of his neighbourhood.” Extraordinary sanctity, in any religion, is, I believe, seldom assumed without the sacrifice of some other virtue: if honesty remain firm, charity frequently gives way.

It is said that 40,000 people go annually in this caravan. The journey to Mecca, and back to Cairo, takes up a hundred days, twelve only of which are allotted for the stay at Mecca. Some women of consequence rode in a sort of litter, made of lattice, resting on two poles, and carried by two camels, one following the other. Men of consequence rode on a saddled camel. Inferior persons rode on camels loaded with their carpets and other necessities. Some camels carried two persons, by means of a basket on each side, with a top like the head of a cradle, and a bottom like a panier; the latter containing all the necessities, and the pilgrims sitting cross-legged on the cover. And a multitude walked on foot.

The mendicant devotees were so worn out by fatigue, that they all bore a resemblance to each other, being as meagre as the countries through which they had passed are barren, and as much decayed as prisoners who had been long in a dungeon. Opinion renders man the strongest of all animals. What, but the powerful force of opinion, could support him during so long and so painful a journey! His object is the sacred title of Hadgi, and the privilege of relating to admiring auditors all that he has seen, and has not seen.

I have been informed that every pilgrim at Mecca is obliged to kill a sheep: by which I suppose is meant every pilgrim who has a sheep, or can procure one; for I hardly think the obligation can extend further; however this be, mutton was certainly never more plentiful: the exact number of sheep slaughtered on a particular day I have forgotten; I believe my Mohammedan friend said millions; but as I have not been at Mecca myself, I do not affirm it as a fact.

## CHAPTER IV.

## DAMIETTA, LAKES OF NATRON.

THE usual method of travellers in Egypt is to embark on the Nile at Cairo, and proceed to Upper Egypt. Many of these gentlemen have digressed to the right and to the left occasionally; but some have wanted opportunity, and others money, to accomplish it wholly. My plan was to leave nothing behind me unseen; and youth, health, and riches, enabled me to pursue it, wherever it was practicable. I therefore embarked on the Nile, and returned towards the North.

The point of the Delta, which divides the river into two streams, is only ten miles below Cairo; the branch of Rosetta bends to the West; that of Damietta preserves its Northern direction, and carries with it the greater quantity of water. I proceeded on the branch of Damietta, and in three days and a half I arrived at that city.

Villages are much more frequent on the Eastern than on the Western branch of the Nile. Below Atril they are so near each other that the borders of the river appear like a continued town, interrupted only by gardens and woods. I visited two of these villages, which were not worth the pains I took to walk through them. The bazars were dark and narrow; the streets dirty and crooked; the houses, some of brick, some of mud, and many falling to ruin without being repaired; the people wretched,



and plainly shewing that it was not for themselves they cultivated the rich lands around them.

Semenhout, on the Western bank of the Nile, is a well-peopled commercial town of the middle size; the bazars are well supplied with merchandize, and the houses are all of brick. Here we provided ourselves with pigeons, poultry, and excellent fresh butter.

After sailing two hours, we perceived the minarets of Mansoura, at which place I went on shore. It is a tolerably large town, but without any fortification; the streets, as usual, are narrow; and the houses, as in other towns of the same importance, are of brick. One quarter is half in ruins. Syrian Christians, who are established here, carry on the chief trade, of which the principal articles are rice and sal ammoniac.

Having walked through Mansoura, I visited the canal which bounds it on the North; it is broad and deep. Below Mansoura the villages are less frequent than above it. Here we met twenty boats, each laden with two hundred hives of bees, which were employed in making honey during the voyage.

Damietta forms a vast crescent on the Eastern border of the Nile, and from one extremity of the crescent, the eye takes in the whole extent. It is larger than Rosetta, and is said to contain 80,000 souls. The ancient city of Damietta stood four or five miles lower down the river, and its ruins yet remain at the village of Esbe; but, on account of its having been often attacked by Europeans, the Sultans of Egypt demolished it in the 12th century, and built the city where it now stands. The soil of Egypt has so far advanced into the Mediterranean Sea, that the ancient Damietta is now three miles from the shore, and the modern seven and a half.

Damietta is situated upon a tongue of land, from two to six miles in breadth, formed by the Nile on the West, and the lake Menzalé on the East, and intersected by rivulets in every direction, which render it the most fertile tract in Egypt. The bazars of Damietta are filled with merchants; the okals or khans, exhibit the stuffs of India, the silks of Syria, sal ammoniac, and pyramids of rice. The houses, particularly those near the river, are well built, and have saloons constructed on the terraced roofs. Many large mosques, with lofty minarets, are scattered about the city.

A multitude of barks and small vessels continually fill the port of Damietta. The commerce is chiefly carried on by the Christians of Aleppo and Damascus: the indolent Turk allows them to grow rich, and contents himself with squeezing them from time to time.

The land of Damietta commonly yields eighty bushels of rice for one, and other produce in the same proportion; and every season presents flowers, fruits, and harvests. Here is found in abundance the reed with which the orientals write, and the papyrus with which the ancient Egyptians made their paper. The latter is a triangular rush, about eight or nine feet high, of the thickness of one's thumb, and with a tufted head. Here also the lotus rears its stem above the waters, opens its large cup of light blue, or dazzling white, and seems the monarch of aquatic plants.

The country round Damietta is full of villages, most of which manufacture the fine linen of Egypt; and, in particular, beautiful napkins, fringed with silk, which, in visits of ceremony are presented, to wipe the mouth after eating sweetmeats, or drinking

sherbet. Sherbet is only given by great men. It is composed of the juice of citron, sugar, and water, in which a perfumed paste made of the fine fruits of Damascus has been dissolved; a few drops of rose-water are generally added.

The villages near Damietta are commonly encircled by trees and fruits of various kinds; and the citrons and oranges hang over the hut of the labourer. I have penetrated through these shades, by winding paths, till I have found myself on the banks of the lake Menzalé. A mile from Damietta is a wood of orange trees more than thirty feet high, planted in straight lines, which is the public resort of the inhabitants. The united branches of the trees intercept the rays of the sun.

The water of the lake Menzalé is fresh during the inundation of the Nile, and salt when that has subsided. It contains islands which no modern traveller has seen. About 1200 boats are constantly fishing upon its waters; 2000 persons are fishing throughout the year, and millions of birds are living upon fish; yet there is no sensible diminution of their numbers. The waters of the lake Menzalé are covered with wild geese, ducks, teal, divers, cormorants, herons, snipes, cranes, swans, pelicans, and flamingoes. It is easy to name the principal kinds of birds that are seen on the lake, but it is impossible to conceive the multitude. As far as the eye can reach, the waves are covered with them; innumerable flocks are describing vast circles in the air, and thousands are taking flight on the approach of the fishermen, and seeking refuge in the desert.

I should have wished to explore a lake once so famous for the great cities on its banks, and still preserving magnificent remains; but the inhabitants

being, by their situation, little amenable to justice, are to be dreaded equally by land and by water, and plunder all travellers without distinction; I was therefore obliged to content myself with seeing an immense surface of water; islands in the distance; trees and villages on the borders; boats fishing or rowing; and the continual movement of the birds.

On my return from Damietta, I went on shore at the port of Great Mahalla, on the eastern side of the river; and rode, together with my attendants, on hired asses, to the city, which is about four miles distant. It is large, tolerably well-built of brick, and the capital of a province. The next day I set out for Baalbeit, a village four or five miles to the south east of Great Mahalla, where there are great remains of a temple, the most costly in its materials of any in Egypt. As well as I could trace out the foundation, it appears to have been about 200 feet long and 100 feet wide. The walls seem to have been 10 feet thick, and are built on the outside with grey granite, and on the inside with fine red. Most of the stones were ten feet long and five deep and broad. The columns, all broken to pieces, were of red granite, and four feet in diameter, and the capitals were the head of Isis. It was with deep regret I saw portions of these hewn into mill stones. I conjectured that there might have been four rows of twelve pillars each, in this temple; but what commanded my attention more, was the exquisite sculpture of the hieroglyphics. The figures of the Egyptian deities and priests, about four feet high, had an air that excited my greatest admiration. I observed several pieces of very fine and uncommon marbles, which probably were the remains of statues that had adorned the temple.

On my return to Cairo, I sailed down the western branch of the Nile to Rosetta, and proceeded to Aboukir, intending from thence to visit the lakes of Natron, and the convents of the Copts, which are situated in the desert beyond the western mountain wall of Egypt. My attendants were a Nubian, two Egyptians, and two Janisaries; and having agreed with Hussein, an Arab Sheik, who undertook to furnish a horse for myself, and camels for my people and baggage, we directed our course to the south east, crossing a sandy plain entirely destitute of inhabitants; and after travelling about twenty miles, we arrived at the camp of my guide and protector, where I was expected. Hussein's tent was prepared for my reception. It was spread with carpets manufactured by the women of his family, and a few fagots covered with carpets served as cushions. The domestic animals, which are accustomed to share the tent of a Bedouin, had been all dismissed, except one young ox.

The tents of the Bedouins are low, of much greater length than breadth, and entirely open on one of the sides, which is placed contrary to the wind: they are made of a stuff fabricated of camel's hair. The tent of Hussein was distinguished from the others by a large plume of black ostrich feathers placed on the summit. Hussein was a cultivator of the ground, and this was his home. He inhabited a fertile spot, on which horses, camels, sheep, and a few oxen, were grazing.

A live sheep, intended for the supper of my little party, was brought me to Hussein's tent, which was become mine, the young ox, only, being allowed a place in it, and my servants and soldiers being accommodated in other tents. I spared the life of the



poor sheep, and supped on delicious milk and excellent little crisp cakes; the women continually pressing me to eat. On retiring to rest, I found that my kind hosts had left other animals in the tent besides the young ox. Fleas worried me so incessantly that I did not sleep. The ground and the carpets were covered with them, and I could not but admire the insensibility of the Arabs who could sleep in such company.

Our second day's journey lay on the banks of the canal of Alexandria. On our side, were some small tracts of cultivated land; on the opposite, a line of villages ranged with the canal, at a small distance from it. At a large village on our side, an order from one of the Beys commanding all his subalterns to protect and assist me, procured me a dinner from the Sheik el Belled, or Chief of the Town. In the afternoon we proceeded along a plain everywhere embellished by cultivation, and on which a few little hills seemed planted on purpose to break the uniformity, and add to the beauty. In the evening we arrived at Guebil, a village on the western bank of the canal of Alexandria, and, like all I had seen, built of mud.

On the third day we crossed the canal of Alexandria, opposite to Guebil, without wetting our shoes, and reached Damanhour at ten o'clock in the morning. The road between these two places led through fields of clover, and beans in blossom. Damanhour is the capital of a province, which is one of the finest countries in the world.

Nothing can convince the natives of this country that Europeans travel among them to examine antiquities, animals, and plants. They can comprehend but one motive strong enough for such fatiguing researches, the discovery of gold. They believe that

the Europeans possess an art which they call *the art of writing well*, by means of which they can attract treasures to the surface of the earth, however deep they may be buried. My fame had reached Damanhour before me ; I passed for an adept in the supernatural *art of writing well* ; and a merchant of the place came to me in secret at my caravanserai, and offered to enter into partnership with me. He proposed to be at all the expence of conducting me wherever there were ruins, and of digging among them, on condition that he should have half the treasures I caused to rise out of the ground. I laughed at the project, and dismissed the merchant, without convincing him of its impracticability.

The city of Damanhour is large, but ill built ; almost all the houses being of mud or bad bricks. It is the centre of a traffic in cotton, which grows in the fine and spacious plains around it. This being collected, beaten, carded and spun at Damanhour, furnishes employment for the greater part of the inhabitants.

On the fourth day of our journey we proceeded south east and south to Nagresh, where the inhabitants could hardly be prevailed upon to admit us into their houses, believing we were come to plunder them ; and when we were admitted, I could hardly conceive how a people so wretchedly poor could be afraid of being robbed. It seems that they were at war with the inhabitants of a larger village in the neighbourhood, whom they suspected of a design to attack them ; and not an hour of the night passed without the women coming to our door for refuge, with loud cries that the robbers were coming. At Nagresh there were twelve villages in sight.

On the fifth day of our journey, we passed through

a town called Beeban, in which is held, every Monday, a considerable market for camels and other beasts. It was now the market, and we had some trouble to make our way through it, from the great throng of men and cattle. Hussein intended we should pass the night at a village called Honèze, but the inhabitants were not of the same mind. They shut their doors against us, and we were obliged to have recourse to threats to gain admission. Honèze is on the line of separation between fertile plains and barren desert; and the miserable inhabitants are perpetually exposed to the depredations of the Arabs, and the extortions of their own government.

On the sixth day we entered one of those desolate regions that divide habitable lands from each other. and are, themselves, the continual abode of drought and sterility. Hussein was well experienced in journeys of this sort. Memory still paints him in my imagination, walking, instead of riding on his camel, with his hands behind him, traversing the bare plains, where no mark appeared to direct his steps, with as much tranquillity as I should have passed the mile-stones on a turnpike road in England.

These tracts of sand and stone in which not a particle of vegetable mould is seen, rise with a gentle ascent, which forms, first eminences, then hills, and at length mountains. For two or three leagues at the beginning of the ascent, the ground was covered with a thick bed of fine moveable sand, into which both men and beasts sunk as they walked. We then found spaces covered with pebbles, at first rare, afterwards more frequent, as the land became more elevated. When we reached the summit, the fine sand was seen no more; the stratum being solid, and

strewn with pebbles of various shapes and colours. In the narrow recesses of the hills were scattered a few thorny shrubs.

We travelled South-west all the day, and at night slept on the sand, under a dew so copious as to leave us in the same state that heavy rain would have done. We suffered greatly from cold, but did not kindle a fire, lest we should have been discovered by the Arabs.

Our seventh day's journey brought us to the lakes. We had travelled about forty or forty-two miles, from the beginning of the desert, on a gradual ascending slope, which had brought us to the top of the Western wall of Egypt. Beyond the chain of mountains which forms this barrier, and parallel with it, at the distance of from nine to twelve miles, runs another, which are perpendicular from their summits down to more than half their height, and, below this, are gentle declivities of fine loose sand. These two ranges of hills form a deep valley, which is furrowed by narrow channels still deeper, running in the same direction as the hills. In the bottom of this valley, at the foot of the farther, or Western range of hills, are the Lakes of Natron.

Natron is an alkaline earthy salt. It is uncommon to meet with it pure: for besides the earthy matter which is almost always mixed with it, it is generally united with marine salt, Glauber's salt, and a small degree of vitriolic tartar.

In the season when the water is most abundant, the two lakes are united in one, and occupy a space of several leagues; at other periods, they are only ponds of no great extent. When the two lakes separate, and their waters retire, the soil they had covered is loaded with a sediment, which becomes

crystallized and hardened by the sun. In those places that have been slightly wet, the salt resembles flakes of snow; where the water has remained long, the layer is thick. It is said that the water is at some times covered with a crust of natron strong enough to bear a camel; when I saw it, it was clear.

The natron is separated from the ground with iron instruments, and carried on camels to Terrana, where it is shipped on the Nile, and conveyed to Cairo and Rosetta. It is delivered at either of those cities at from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* the hundred weight. Twelve hundred and fifty tons are gathered annually, and more might be obtained. It is principally used in bleaching thread or cloth; two hundred pounds weight of which requires one hundred pounds of the common natron, and from sixty to eighty pounds of lime. Natron is also used in dying, in making glass, in the preparation of leather, in pastry, in preserving meat, and in giving poignancy to snuff.

Having traversed the borders of the lakes, which are overshadowed by shrubs, plants, and reeds, we proceeded on a sand covered with hardened natron, till we arrived within a short distance of a large square edifice in which a few Coptic monks live, shut up from the world. No path leads to it; no tree grows near it, there is no apparent entrance to it.

When we were about five or six hundred paces from the convent, Hussein advanced to procure us admission; when a troop of Bedouins, nearly a hundred in number, rushed from behind the walls. Some of the Arabs detained Hussein and seized his musquet, the main body galloped towards me, and stopping suddenly, at the distance of a hundred yards, divided themselves into four bands; three of



which took their stations on each side and behind me, while the fourth remained in front. My soldiers were disconcerted at this movement, and flung down their arms: mine were no longer of any use, and they followed: in the twinkling of an eye, money, garments, effects and provisions, were all taken from us, and spread upon the sand. I was stripped to my vest and drawers, and my people to their shirts.

The Arabs began to divide the spoil with obstreperous noise, and I was advancing towards the monastery in search of Hussein, when I was seized by the arm by the Chief of the Arabs, whose face was as black as that of a negro. He led me back into the midst of the troop, without speaking; and I imagined that he was either going to deprive me of the garments his people had left me, or of my life. How great was my surprize then to see him collecting my clothes, and effects, returning my purse and restoring my arms.

It appeared that after a long dispute, Hussein had got up behind one of the Arabs, who detained him, and having been conveyed into the midst of the troop, had addressed the Chief in the following manner: "Sheik, you have stripped a man who has put himself under my protection; a man who has eaten with me, who has slept under my tent, and for whose safety I have pledged my head; take my life, or restore all that belongs to my brother." The black Chief, whose name was Abdallah, consented to the restitution, which was performed with a fidelity truly admirable; the Chief coming to ask me if any thing were yet missing, and on my naming any article, mounting on a little eminence and crying, "such a thing is not restored: let it be

brought." On this, it was instantly produced and given to me.

Hussein insisted upon my counting in his presence the sequins that had been taken from me, and I found the number exact. Abdallah then insisted on my riding his horse to the monastery, while he attended me on foot; and some of his people paid the same compliment to my attendants. When we came near the walls, we saw baskets of bread, and wooden dishes of lentils, let down by ropes; and, seating ourselves in a circle on the ground, we dined with those people who had lately been our enemies. The repast finished, they accosted me with cordiality, and thanked God that no injury had befallen me.

At parting, the Chief of the Arabs asked me for some remuneration; observing that he had been at much trouble to procure the restoration of my property, and had retained none of it. I was preparing to give him some of my sequins, when Hussein flew in a passion, and protested that I should not part with a single *medin* (one penny and two thirds); and he watched me so closely that it was not in my power to do so.

Abdallah then demanded of me a written attestation that I had met with him in the desert, that he had taken nothing from me, and that I was satisfied with his conduct. Here something might have been said on both sides; but I had no hesitation in choosing the most favourable. A certificate to the purport he desired, written in Arabic, was, at his request, let down by the Monks; and I most willingly signed it with my name. Abdallah carefully put up this *good bill*, and, wishing us a safe journey, left us.

## CHAPTER V.

### CONVENT IN THE DESERT.

WE had now a long dispute with the Monks of Zaïdi el Baramous. They were at first very scrupulous with regard to admitting me at all; and afterwards insisted that I should be drawn up by a rope, instead of being allowed to enter at a small portal with an iron wicket. I was a young traveller, and I objected to the indignity of being drawn up like a bucket from a well; and Hussein swore he would have shelter for his camels, or he would bring an armed force to the monastery which should exterminate all its inhabitants. The last argument was unanswerable, and the wicket was opened. The difficulty now was to get in the camels; as the entrance was much too low: it was, however obviated by their being severally tied, neck and heels, and dragged through upon a mat. For my part, I knew not which to admire most, the perseverance of the Arab, which accomplished the introduction of a large animal through a small aperture; or the patience of the camel, which suffered itself to be dragged along by repeated jerks.

Night came on before we and our beasts had arrived within the inclosure of the monastery. The Monks conducted all of us, except Hussein, into their chapel to hear their evening service, which we thought too long; and then gave us a supper of rice, boiled in water, which we thought too short.

The day after our arrival at the monastery, Hussein reminded me of the trouble he had had in extricating me out of the hands of Abdallah and his troop, and said it would be no longer in his power to answer for my safety. He concluded by saying that he should return immediately, and would take me with him if I chose it; but that I must determine without delay. My determination was as prompt as he could wish. I had not come to the Monastery of the Desert to leave it immediately; and Hussein, chagrined at my resolve, embraced me affectionately, and left me shut up within four walls, without either of us knowing how I should get out.

The Monastery of Zaïdi el Baramous is inclosed by lofty walls, in which was originally formed a grand entrance; but this is built up with stone, like the rest of the edifice; except the small aperture at the bottom, through which we entered; and even that is only opened when the Monks receive their provisions, which come by caravans from Cairo. Within the walls, there is a small fortress, surrounded by a ditch, over which there is a draw-bridge. To this the Monks retire if the Arabs force the outward wall. In general they are upon friendly terms with the Arabs, and supply them with water and provisions, when their predatory excursions bring them near the Monastery; but they told me that Hussein, my faithful Hussein, had been formerly the leader of the most powerful band in the country, though he had for some years led a peaceful life; and that about ten years ago, he had broken through the outer wall, pillaged the Monastery, and obliged them to intrench themselves in their citadel.

Within the fort, is a chapel, a reservoir for rain-water, a storehouse for provisions, and every thing

necessary for enabling the Monks to sustain a long blockade. Here too are books in the Coptic language, a compound of Greek and the remains of the ancient Egyptian: and though the Monks never read them; though they lie in heaps on the ground, mouldering in dust, and preyed upon by insects; they will not part with them.

The cells of the Monks, which are vaulted and very low, are built round the court, and level with the ground. In the centre of the inclosure, they have hollowed out a small space, on which they have scattered some earth; and in this are a few trees and plants that thrive tolerably well.

I was soon weary of living in the desert with Coptic Monks. Their countenances were ugly, mean, and broad; their stature short; their persons filthy and disgusting; their worship confused and discordant; their manners rude; and their dress a long, dirty, black shirt, differing but one shade from the hue of their faces.

There were only three fathers in the Monastery and a few brethren; but some of the Coptic farmers come occasionally, and bring, with their devotion, a part of the means of subsistence for the Monks. The whole of the inhabitants amounted to twenty-three persons. They all ate together, and their fare was as bad as possible; biscuit made with the flour of lentils, rice and lentils boiled in salt and water, vile cheese, and sometimes a little honey. Their sole beverage was brackish and ill-tasted water. A peasant had shot a flamingo on the banks of the Natron Lakes, and presented it to me. The bird is bad enough; but by us, who had lived some days in rigorous abstinence, it was considered as a delicacy. My people hastened to roast it; but before we could taste a



morsel, the monks seized it, like so many beasts of prey, and our bird disappeared in a moment, under the nails and teeth of these hooded jackals.

One morning, the bell at the gate of the Monastery was rung violently, and we saw a troop of seven Bedouins arrive. They had shewn much distrust and anxiety in approaching the walls, having learned that strangers were within. The Monks lowered down some provisions; and while the Bedouins were eating, I put on the robe and head-dress of a friar, and mingled among the Copts on the walls, to hear the conversation that passed.

The Arabs said, they had been informed that Sheik Hussein had been there with camels, and they wished to know on what account. One of them had ridden round the walls the evening before, and had seen upon them a person with a red shawl wrapped round his head; they believed there were Franks in search of treasures, and they were desirous to meet with them.

The honest Monks invented various stories to mislead the Arabs, which it was evident they did not credit; however, they rode away as soon as they had finished their repast, and we saw them no more.

I had sent one of the peasants that were in the Monastery to Terrana, where I had been informed there was a camp of Bedouins, to engage them to conduct us to that place, and to bring with them beasts for us to ride. On the fifth day of our residence among the Copts, ten of these Bedouins arrived, well armed, with a camel and some asses.

On taking leave of my villainous hosts, I proposed to make them a present, and I asked the superior what sum would be acceptable to him. He told me that, in the first place, I must bestow something on

the Monastery ; secondly, on the embellishment of the chapel ; thirdly, on the poor ; and lastly, on himself. I enquired what he thought might be sufficient for these several purposes ; and after a few moments' calculation, he answered, that as the Monastery wanted white-washing all over, he supposed the whole would require five or six hundred sequins. This was a modest requisition for five days' lodging, and board on lentils, rice, and water ; however, I made him an offer in return. My purse contained only twelve sequins, which I tendered to the Superior. His calculation and mine were wide of each other ; he flew in a passion that it would not be easy to describe, loaded me with invectives, and swore by all the saints of his church that I should soon repent my ingratitude. He invoked heaven against me, and said it would send him some Arabs, whom he would dispatch after me, with a commission to be his avengers. At this, I could not keep my temper ; and I darted through the wicker, lest I should have knocked the rascal down.

As I was going to mount the ass intended for my riding, the Superior sent to intreat me to give him the twelve sequins I had offered. I delivered them to the messenger, and immediately saw the Monk putting up his prayers for my prosperous journey, to that heaven, which he had, a few minutes before, invoked for my destruction.

We travelled south south-east for six miles, through deep passes, parallel with the great hills, and covered with a fine sand. We then entered a second Monastery, called Zaïdi Sourian, which we found was constructed on the same plan as that we had left ; but the buildings were more commodious, and the Monks less dirty, stupid, and ferocious.

The Superior was turned of thirty, and without any beard. In a country where a man is respected in proportion to the length of his beard, the total want of such an ornament was a severe mortification, and the Monk earnestly intreated me to instruct him in the means of acquiring such an embellishment to his chin.

The garden of these Monks is something larger and better cultivated than that of the others; and in one of the courts is a monstrous tamarind tree, which the Copts consider as the effect of miraculous vegetation. A certain Saint Ephrem leaving his staff at the door of a brother hermit, it instantly took root, put forth branches, and quickly became this enormous tamarind tree. To heighten the miracle, the Monks affirm that it is the only tamarind tree in Egypt; and the conclusion of the story is equally true with the beginning. The water of the well is better than that of the other Convent; a few trees overshadow a part of the inclosure, and attract some small birds; while the rugged aspect of nature at Zaïdi el Baramous frightens away every creature that has breath. Zaïdi Sourian is only two miles from the Lakes of Natron.

I departed from the Monastery the next morning at three o'clock, having bestowed on the Monks all I had, some pieces of silver, and being firmly resolved not to set my foot within another of their retreats. I had no money left to pay for my entertainment, and I knew there was nothing in them worth visiting. There were two more. The first of these, Amba Bishoi, was only a few paces from that I had quitted; and the Monks stood at the gate, soliciting me to enter, and promising to shew me the body of a saint, as fresh and rosy as if he were alive, I de-

clined the invitation, and they were greatly offended at my want of respect for their saint; in other words, disappointed of the money they expected to receive for my visit. The other monastery is called Amba Monguar, and is dedicated to St. Macarius; but we directed our course to the Eastward, and, passing the Southern extremity of the Lake, we left it full three miles on our right.

We kept on our way the whole of the day and all the night, and at five o'clock in the morning, we arrived at a village on the western bank of the Nile. The camp of my conductors was close to this village; the Sheik brought me to his tent, and the women immediately set before us the repast of hospitality.

I had informed the Sheik at our first interview that I could not pay him for the journey till I had been at Cairo for a fresh supply of money: his answer was, that he was not only willing to trust me, but had money at my service. I did not consider that this offer was made me by an Arab, and I thought of it no more. Our meal was no sooner over, however, than my host, taking his purse from a small coffer which stood in a corner of the tent, and presenting it to me, said, "I know that rascally monk at Zaïdi el Baramous has taken all your gold. The letters you have would procure all you want from the Cashef of Wardan; but I cannot bear that a man with whom I have eaten, should apply to a dog of a Mamelûk for assistance. Take this money; if you refuse it, I shall think that you disdain a friend because he is one of the people of the desert." That I might not offend my generous host, I took a few patakas, which he would not suffer me to count in his presence; nor would he listen to me, when I promised to repay him.

In three days, I had been at Cairo, and returned to the tent of the generous Sheik, who was astonished to see me so soon. I obliged him to take the money I owed him, and added to it some yards of cloth; and while I was partaking of his frugal repast, he sent a sheep, and other provisions to my boat, without my knowledge. I parted with this worthy Arab with gratitude and admiration, and again sailed up to Cairo.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### SUEZ AND FAIOUME.

WHEN large caravans travel in these countries, they have at their head a chief, whose office it is to guide them, to regulate the time of their departure, the length of their journies, and their rest, and to treat with the princes who may exact duties for the liberty of passing through their dominions. Small caravans have no such guide. The chief merchant in the party proceeds and halts as he pleases, and the rest follow his example. When there is no merchant considerable enough to possess this influence, the Arab who owns the greatest number of beasts of burden conducts the caravan, -

My next excursion was to Suez, which is three days journies, or from sixty to seventy-seven miles, South-East of Cairo; and I joined a caravan which consisted only of forty loaded camels. Their drivers were few, and armed with broken guns, and rusty



or pointless sabres. Myself and a few Sheiks, to whom most of our camels belonged, were completely armed, and rode upon dromedaries, and my attendants were chiefly mounted on horseback.

There are four roads from Cairo to Suez. The first and most northerly, passes by mountains called Hauhebi, and by Adjeroute. The second, by the valley of Tearo Said, by a narrow defile called Hara-mentelah, and by Adjeroute. The third, the road of the pilgrims, from Birket el Hadgi, the Lake of the Pilgrims, which is about eight miles from Cairo, ascends low hills on the east, continues along them, and comes into the second road at Tearo Said. The fourth, and most southern road, runs to the south of those hills on which are the two last.

Birket el Hadgi is a considerable lake, which receives its waters from the Nile. On its banks are several villages, and a number of ruinous country houses. The pilgrims encamp near it for a few days, on their setting out for, and return from Mecca. From this place to Adjeroute, which is within about ten miles of Suez, the country is a desert; neither houses, water, nor the smallest spot of verdure being visible. The great road consists of a number of parallel paths, formed by the camels, which travel in files.

On the third day, we reached Adjeroute, where is a caravanserai and a well, now in a ruinous state; then Bir Suez, two deep wells, surrounded with walls, and shut up by strong gates, to exclude the Arabs from the water, which, though bad, is precious to the inhabitants of Suez; and at the distance of two miles further, we arrived at Suez itself.

The city of Suez stands upon the western side, but not quite at the western extremity of the Ara-

bian Gulph. It is not surrounded by walls, but the houses are built so closely together, that there are only two passages into the city: that towards the sea is open; that towards the country is shut by a very insufficient gate. The town is small and thinly inhabited; the houses are of unburnt brick, and many of them in a ruinous state. From their terraced roofs, the eye surveys a sandy plain, on the north-west; the white rocks of Arabia on the east; and the sea on the south; but not a single tree, or the smallest spot of verdure. The country around is one bed of rock, slightly covered with sand; and gardens, fields and meadows, are entirely unknown at Suez.

Fish is the only article of provisions plentiful here; all the other necessities of life are brought from Cairo or from Asia. Meat is scarce; bread is of an inferior quality; butter and milk are supplied in small quantities by the Arabs. At Suez there is not a single spring of water: that at Bir Suez is scarcely good enough for cattle, though it is drawn twice a day for their use; the water of the Wells of Moses, on the other side of the Gulph, is worse, and at a greater distance; the only water that can be drank, and it is still very bad, is brought in skins, by the Arabs, from the Wells of Naba, on the opposite side of the Gulph, and more than five miles distant from Suez. When the Arabs of Tor are dissatisfied with the governor or inhabitants of Suez, they threaten to bring no more water, and forbid them to approach the Wells of Naba. As the execution of these threats would reduce the city to extremity, all means are used to pacify the Arabs.

The English army marched from Suez to Cairo in the month of June, when the Kamseen wind pre-

vails. The thermometer was found to be from 86° to 116, and once it was supposed to have been 140. Water became thick and full of maggots, and occasioned vomiting and pains in the bowels: the officers drank Madeira, and the soldiers mixed spirits with the puddle. Salt meat was thrown away, for fear of increasing thirst; fresh meat would have been rendered useless by the heat; dried meat was not known; and flour was not thought of.

Some of the men were seized with giddiness and loss of sight,—others fell down, gasping for breath, and calling out for drink. While tormented with thirst, they were perpetually deluded with the appearance of a vast lake of water before their eyes, and in the dark they fancied they saw men, horses, and camels moving rapidly before them. No man had tasted a morsel of food from the time of leaving Suez, till they reached the springs of el Hanka, twelve miles short of Cairo, which took up thirty-four hours. Two horses broke loose near the wells, and drank till they died. The way was hard sand for forty miles, rising ground for ten, and deep heavy sand for twenty. During the whole march, no vegetation whatsoever, no bird, nor beast, had been seen.

Another excursion which I made was to Faioume, a city sixty miles south-west of Cairo. The caravans go once a week from Cairo to Faioume; but as the Cashef, or governor of the province, was going thither, I obtained the privilege of accompanying him. I had the honour of supping with this officer the night before our departure, and I recommended myself to his good graces by a present of some spirituous liquors, with which I took care he should be well supplied.

South of Metrahenny we stopped to rest, and I had my carpet spread at some distance from the Cashef, but he invited me to come to him, and I shared his repast of bread, raw onions, and a sort of pickled cheese. We passed the night in a grove of palm trees, and I received another invitation; but before we began our supper, a great Sheik entered the tent; and as I thought it probable that the Cashef might neither like to be seen in the company of a Christian, nor drinking brandy, I retired to my place, whither he sent me a part of his repast.

On the following day we ascended the low sandy hills on the south-west, and passing over an uneven desert, and afterwards a sandy plain, we arrived at Tamieh. We passed the night at the large village of Sennours, where the governor of the place had prepared a great supper for the Cashef.

A coarse brown woollen cloth being spread nearly the whole length of the room, cakes of bread were laid all around it, and about ten dishes, repeated six or seven times, were placed along it. These contained pilaw, a small sheep boiled whole, a lamb roasted whole, fowls roasted, meat roasted, and stewed in soup, sweet flummery, &c. The Cashef sat at the head of the table, and all the great people took their places at the same time. I might have placed myself among them, but being determined not to do any thing without direction, I remained upon the sofa, and when the person on the Cashef's right hand rose, the Cashef called me to his place, and shewed me great attention, which was more honourable for me than if I had taken a lower seat at first. There was a continual succession of persons, till the poor came in, and ate up all; for the Arabs, when they make a feast, call in their neighbours,

and afterwards the poor, till nothing remains, and the next day they return to their mean fare.

On the morning of the third day, we had a grand collation, set out in the same manner as the supper. This consisted of the best bread, made with butter, fried eggs, honey, green salt cheese, olives, and several other small things.

We were here in the fertile province of Arsinoë, which is said to have been the most beautiful spot in Egypt. We pursued our journey, and came to Baïameut. To the north of the village there are ruins on each side of the road, which I found, on examination, to be those of two pyramids. We arrived at Faioume through heaps of ruins of the ancient city of Arsinoë. Here, and by the two pyramids, I saw people sifting the sand, to find seals and medals.

Faioume stands near the great canal of Yusef, which proceeds from the Nile to the lake Mæris. The town is two miles in circumference, but very ill built, the houses being chiefly of unburnt bricks. It is on the decline, though still populous. It is the residence of the Cashef, or governor of the province, and of several rich persons, who own villages in the neighbourhood; there are also sixty Arabs in the town, who have the title of Sheik. There is at Faioume a large manufacture of the mats that are used in Egypt to lay upon the floors. It is surrounded by gardens and cultivated grounds, and has been famous for rose water, but the cultivation of roses is going to decay. The vicinity produces very fine grapes.

At Faioume I had an apartment given me in the Cashef's house, and had a table served every day in my own room. Sometimes the Cashef invited me



to dine with him, when the brandy went plentifully round, and the great man diverted himself by jesting with two or three of his dependents; for in private, the Turks can lay aside their gravity, and display as much levity as the Europeans.

About three miles to the south-west of Faioume is a remarkable obelisk of red granite. The lower part is divided into fourteen columns of hieroglyphics, and above these are four rows of human figures, six in each row, and eighteen inches high. The obelisk is forty-three feet high and six feet six inches by four feet two, at the base. We afterwards came to the great canal of Joseph, which is about a hundred yards broad, with cliffs on the east forty feet high, and on the west thirty.

The large village of Nesle is close to the canal; and here the Caimacan, to whom I had a letter from the Cashef, agreed with a Sheik to provide me camels to carry water and provisions, and an escort of Arabs on horseback, to the lake Mæris.

After two hours travelling, the desert begins. Ruins covered with sand, and stones scattered around, mark the site of the ancient labyrinth, said to have contained 1500 rooms above ground, and as many beneath, and to have been erected by twelve contemporary kings, when the government of Egypt was divided into so many parts.

The temple of the labyrinth is 165 feet long, and 80 broad. The upper story is chiefly gone. As the building now remains, it is 33 feet high. The length is divided into four rooms, which I imagine were near 20 feet high. They have door-ways surmounted with double cornices and the winged globe, and are covered with stones of such a length as to be laid from wall to wall. Beyond these are narrow apartments.

The lake Mæris is said to be four days' journies in circumference: some travellers make it fifty miles in length and ten in breadth; others between twenty and thirty in length, and nearly six in breadth. All have depended upon the information of the Arabs, for no European has made its circuit. There are no villages near it, and its western banks are under the dominion of Arabs, who suffer no person to travel thither, unless under their immediate protection. When I saw it, the lake was much retired within its banks; it is therefore possible that both accounts may approach the truth,—the one at the time of the inundation of the Nile, the other after it has subsided. Several fishermen, in miserable boats, are employed upon the lake.

I could not prevail upon my Arabs to venture to the edge of the water; but, finding me determined to go alone, they sent one of their company after me. There is a gentle descent to the banks of the lake, after which it was half a mile to the water, first on a slaty ground, and then on a deep slimy mud, incrustated with a thin cake of salt. I waded through this with much difficulty, and reached the water, which was almost as salt as the sea, and of a disagreeable muddy taste. It is observed that the water is not so salt towards the part where it enters from the Nile.

I now returned to Nesle, from which I had been distant nearly twenty miles, and passed the night at the house of the Caimacan, having been eighteen hours in continual motion. At Nesle I treated with the Arabs to conduct me to the two great pyramids of Davara, which I had seen about ten or twelve miles to the South of Faioume, but which could *only* be approached from this place, on account of the

canal being between. They declined the undertaking, but assured me they were only built with unburnt brick.

From Nesle I returned to Faioume, and from the latter place, with the caravan, to Cairo, where we arrived in four days.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### UPPER EGYPT, TO SIOUT.

**I** NOW embarked upon the Nile, and turned my face to the south, prepared to visit all the accessible part of Upper Egypt. In the course of my reading I had observed the advantages gained by a distinguished traveller by the practice of physic. Considering, therefore, a knowledge of medicine not only as desirable for my own health, which must necessarily be endangered by a variety of climates and situations, but as a passport among half-civilized nations, I had made myself acquainted with the most common diseases and their remedies. I had brought with me some chests of valuable drugs, and I now assumed the character of a physician, and the habit of a Turk. My eyes were black, my complexion was brown, my beard was by this time respectable, and was thriving apace.

A chain of mountains on the east begins at Cairo. On the peak of these is the monastery of the Chain, so called because the monks can only procure supplies of water, and other necessities, by means of a

long chain attached to a windlass, which they let down to the river. The monks swim into the stream to request alms of the passengers in boats, and, by long habit, they advance against the current like fishes.

The houses of Upper Egypt are of a square form, and pigeon-houses are raised over their roofs, which, at a distance, have the appearance of architectural ornaments, and give the villages a pleasing look; but on a nearer approach, one sees mud walls and the livery of wretchedness.

A small town on the eastern side of the river, called Benesouef, is about ninety miles from Cairo, and the largest in that space. The houses are built of bricks. The convents of St. Anthony and St. Paul are situated in the desert, little more than seven miles from the Red Sea, and a small day's journey from each other. They are visited from Bouche, a little below Benesouef, but I did not visit them, having declined the acquaintance of Egyptian monks. Anthony and Paul were contemporary saints, and lived in the time of the Roman Emperors. Each convent contains a church, with a belfry and a small bell, a mill, a tower with a draw-bridge, where are kept the books and the provisions; a large garden, with apricots, olives, and other fruits; a grove of palm trees, and springs of water not quite fresh. The whole is surrounded by a high wall, and the only admittance is by a window. The monks are forbidden to eat meat or smoke tobacco *in the convent*, which prohibition they ingeniously evade by eating and smoaking *in the garden*. It is probable that in these convents are the only bells in Egypt.

From Benesouef I quitted my boat, and travelled along the western bank of the Nile. The country between the river and the canal of Yusuf is one of the richest in the world.



Oxyrinchus, once a metropolis surrounded by a fertile plain, and six miles from the Lybian range of hills, has disappeared beneath the sand; and the new town, Benesech, has been obliged to retreat from this desolating invader, leaving to its ravages house after house; and the inhabitants must at last be driven beyond the canal Yusuf. The inundation of sand often overwhelms the country, changes its fertility to barrenness, drives the labourer from his house, covers up its walls, and leaves no other mark of vegetable life than the tops of a few palm trees. Indolence and tyranny have also contributed to the encroachment of the sands upon parts once covered by vegetable mould; but such sands as are recently spread over the soil are not deep, and would yield to cultivation as soon as the waters could reach them. These are easily distinguishable from the others: they have not the same reddish and fiery appearance; they have not the same depth; they are not fluctuating, and the foot that treads them feels the solid earth beneath. Perhaps the lands that agriculture could reclaim might amount to one fourth of those at present in cultivation.

From 100 to 115 miles above Cairo, mountains of sand and perpendicular rock advance close to the river on the east, and form straits dangerous to navigation. Soon after, the eastern chain of mountains were cut perpendicularly, and appeared like a lofty wall constructed by the hand of art: the western shore presented cultivated fields, and numerous habitations.

Women carry at once from the Nile three earthen vessels filled with water: a very large one on the head; a smaller one on the back, held fast by a rope which passes round the forehead; and a



smaller still on the left shoulder, held by the right hand.

Nearly 150 miles from Cairo, on the western bank of the river, is Miniet, a city of unburnt brick houses, cemented with earth, and narrow streets, in which we tread on dust. The house of the governor, and a few others, are built of stone. Here are merchants, bazars, and crowded streets. Heaps of rubbish and pillars of granite standing, broken, and overthrown, indicate that Miniet occupies the place of some more ancient city. Beyond Miniet the country was rich and abundant, and the villages so numerous that from the middle of the plain I reckoned twenty-four around me.

The French commander, Desaix, arrived too late to prevent one of these from being pillaged; nothing remained in the houses, and the inhabitants had fled into the fields. Desaix invited them to return. "Why should we return to our houses?" said the Arabs, coldly: "Are not the deserts now as good as our homes?" The French had nothing to reply to these observations.

As I approached the eminence on the eastern side of the Nile on which is situated the celebrated portico of Hermopolis, I saw with delight its gigantic outline in the horizon. This was the first monument which gave me an idea of the ancient Egyptian architecture. A peasant who should be taken from his cottage, and placed before such a building as this, would believe it could not be the work of beings like himself. The portico of Hermopolis consists of six magnificent pillars in front, and six of the same behind, supporting a flat roof; with architrave and frieze still complete; one stone only remains of the cornice. To try these massive columns by any known rules of architecture

would be vain. They are reeded, banded, ornamented with hieroglyphics; and the whole of the building is noble, simple, and grand, beyond expression.

Within three or four hundred yards of the portico, enormous blocks of stone may be seen, half buried in sand, and regular architecture beneath them; these appear to form an edifice containing columns of granite, just rising above the present level of the soil. Further on, but still connected with the fragments of the great temple of Hermopolis, is a mosque in which are a number of columns of moderate size, retouched by the Arabs: then comes the village of Achmounein, containing about 5,000 inhabitants.

The diameter of the pillars of the portico is 8 feet 10 inches: the whole portico is 120 feet in length; its height is 60. The architrave is composed of five stones, each 22 feet long, and the frieze of as many. The only remaining stone of the cornice, which is in the centre, is 34 feet. The stones are freestone, of the fineness of marble, and have no cement, or mode of union, except the perfect fitting of their respective parts. All the roofs are adorned with a wreath of painted stars of an Aurora colour, on a blue ground.

From Achmounein I visited the remains of Antinoë, a city built by the Romans. The extensive site is strewn with fragments, of which the most remarkable is a gateway supported by fluted pillars. But, may I confess it? I had seen an Egyptian portico; and Roman architecture shrunk before the comparison.

There are caverns in the side of the mountain, which the present inhabitants of the country, not comprehending that human art and strength could make such excavations, ascribe to the devil. The missionaries,

believing the devil incapable of performing so pious a work by the instigation of his own evil spirit, say that he was compelled to it by holy exorcisms; and the Coptic legends give the laborious task to a few devout hermits.

Beneadi is a town two miles in length, and containing 12,000 inhabitants. It is situated on the verge of the desert. The French plundered the town, and, among other booty, they took a great number of women, partly residents in the place, and partly slaves, brought by a caravan from Dar-fûr. Those to whose share they fell in the division of the spoil, sold them in open market. From one, they passed to another, rising in value with every change of master; till at last they were purchased by their fathers, husbands, or former masters. Meek and modest, they submitted with resignation to their lot, and were reinstated in their domestic relations without any questions being asked.

Manfelout, on the western side of the river, is a considerable city. The streets are broader and handsomer than those of Miniet; the country around produces abundance, and fruit trees and palm trees shade its walls. The acacia seems to be an indigenous tree in the Thebaid. From the male proceeds the gum Arabic and gum Senegal, upon incision with an axe. It is the tree of all deserts, from the northernmost parts of Arabia, to the extremity of Ethiopia, and the banks of the Senegal; and its leaves are the general food of camels. Manfelout is a mile from the river, and a mile in circumference.

Between Achmounein and Manfelout, the mountains on the west are about sixteen miles distant from the Nile; while those on the east are not three. At Manfelout the whole valley is about eight miles in breadth.

Siout is fifteen miles from Manfelout, and is the largest city of Upper Egypt. It is situated on an artificial mount on the western side of the river, and nearly two miles distant from it. No antiquities are found at Siout; but the Lybian chain of hills, from which it is distant little more than a mile, exhibits such a vast number of sepulchral excavations, that there needs no other proof of its having been the site of some very ancient and considerable city.

I had travelled from Cairo between two ranges, but I had never yet set my foot upon an Egyptian mountain: I hastened to explore that above Siout. I found it formed of horizontal strata of calcareous stone, divided at intervals by large flints, which seem to be the bones that hold together this mouldering flesh, and prevent its total destruction. The decomposition of the softer parts is daily taking place. The salt air, which penetrates every part of the calcareous surface, makes it dissolve in streams of sand, which first are collected in heaps at the foot of the rock, and afterwards are carried away by the winds; encroaching gradually upon the cultivated country. It appears to me that a great part of the lands on the eastern side of the Nile, between Cairo and Achmin, will soon become desert, from the quantity of sand detached from the mountains.

The rocks above Siout are excavated into a vast number of caverns, some with passages leading to different apartments. All the inner porches of these grottoes are covered with hieroglyphics. Months would be required to read them, if one knew their language; and it would take years to copy them. One thing I saw, by the little day-light that enters



the first porch ; that all the scrolls, the wavy lines and other elegant ornaments employed in the Greek architecture, were here executed with great delicacy. The richness of decoration in the interior part forms a striking contrast with the exterior, which is only the rough, naked rock.

I saw, in one of the caverns, consisting of a single apartment, a number of graves cut in the rock, in regular order. They had been ransacked ; but I found several fragments of their contents, such as linen, hands, feet, and loose bones. In another, the first chamber had only an ornamental moulding over a flat arch ; but from thence to the farther end of the innermost apartment, all the walls were covered with hieroglyphics, and the ceilings with painted and sculptured ornaments. On the smooth surfaces of the doors were large human figures, which were repeated on the solid jambes. These caverns form very spacious halls, nearly thirty feet in height, which receive light and air through holes made in the rock ; and have wells dug in a square form, the depth of which is unknown.

I made some stay at Siout, where I practised physic, and had the honour to be called in by Daoud, the Commandant of the city ; but I found that the science of medicine in Egypt was very different from that understood in England. The people reduce all diseases, except such as are visible on the skin, into three classes, proceeding from the *bile*, the *blood*, and the *cold*. A physician is to feel the pulse of his patient, and from this he is to judge of the nature of the disorder ; for he is not allowed to ask any questions. It is true he may receive some assistance from the complexion of the patient ; he may ascribe the yellow to bile, the



red to inflammation, and the pale to cold ; but if he were to inquire into particulars, he would be dismissed as an ignorant blockhead ; and if he ventured to prescribe an injection common in Europe, he would be fortunate if he escaped with his life.

If a man in power die under the care of a foreigner, the physician is regarded as an assassin. He should shun an honour so perilous ; but if he cannot escape it, he must either cure his patient, or expect to die himself. If he administer a remedy that proves troublesome to the great man, he is ordered in, is obliged to remain during the operation of the medicine, and is told that his head must answer for any ill consequences. In the moments of pain, looks of fury are darted at him ; and the wretched physician, more disordered than the sick man, awaits, in mortal agonies, the event of a medicine of which he cannot ensure the success.

Daoud, having proved my skill as a physician, believed that I must be a dealer in magic, and that the secret treasures of the earth, obedient to my voice, would jump into my pocket. A mosque in Siout being universally believed to cover riches of this description, he sent for me, and ordering me to discover the hidden gold, he offered to share it with me. All I could say to undeceive him was vain ; I was obliged to accompany him into the mosque, where, after a pretended examination, I assured him that the report was false, and that no treasure existed beneath it.

This idea, which is general in these countries, is a ramification of the subterranean chambers filled with gold and precious stones, of the Arabian Tales.

While I remained at Siout, a caravan of Nubians were on the eve of departure from that city for Sen-

naar. They were tall and well made, and their skin was of a beautiful shining black ; they wore a beard and whiskers. The Kabir, or leader of the caravan was a very handsome man, with a long thick beard, which, as he was advanced in years, was of a perfect white, and produced a singular contrast with the jet black of his person.

Those Nubians who carry on commerce, speak Arabic ; but among themselves they have a particular idiom. They wear a long shirt of grey cloth, the sleeves of which are turned up to the arm-pits, leaving the arms intirely bare. They have usually several small leathern pockets fastened to the bend of the left arm, in which they keep money, tobacco, and other things. To the bend of the right arm is fixed a poniard with a sheath of leather. On their journey they are likewise armed with a long sabre. They are bare-headed, and they dress their hair, or wool, with great care. I saw some whose curls were arranged like a periwig.

The greater number of the inhabitants of Manfelout and Siout are Copts. They manufacture blue cloths, in which they carry on a considerable commerce ; and being the only people in the country who can read and write, they are the secretaries and stewards of rich and powerful men. They understand how to make an advantageous use of the confidence and incapacity of their employers ; but they have the wisdom to keep their wealth within doors.

One of the opulent Copts of Siout insisted upon giving me a dinner. The interior of his house was genteel and commodious ; every thing announced a man at his ease. The repast was served with profusion, and excellent date brandy was continually presented in small glasses from Venice. Females

were as invisible in the house of this Christian as in those of the Mohammedans. It is custom, not religion, that immures the women of the East. The Copts take their meals in the same manner as the Turks and Arabs. They are seated, with their legs crossed, around a table with one foot, in the form of a large circular tea-board, and take out of the different dishes, small pieces with the fingers of the right hand. The left, being reserved for their ablutions, must not touch provisions. This also reminded me of one of the Arabian Tales, in which a young man affronts a whole company by feeding himself with his left hand; having, unknown to them, lost his right.

The people of this country sometimes make up from various dishes, a large ball, which they cram into a mouth widely distended for that purpose. The poultry and boiled meats are torn to pieces with the hands and nails; the roast meats are cut small before they are put upon the spit, and are excellent.

The table does not afford an opportunity for conversation: people seat themselves only to eat, and they swallow as fast as they can. They are not men, whom the pleasure of society assembles; but animals, whom hunger collects round their food. The grease runs out from each side of their mouths; and their stomachs send forth frequent fumes, which they make as long and as loud as possible. Each rises from table when his appetite is satisfied; no want of politeness attaching to him who rises when others are seated, or remains when others have risen.

With Orientals, it is neither ridiculous nor irksome to be silent. They go into company to be diverted, not to labour; and they esteem effort in conversation a vain toil.

A species of hemp is made into a paste, and mixed with honey, pepper and nutmeg. They swallow pieces of this comfit, about the size of a nut, which procure for them a sort of pleasing intoxication, a delicious stupor, in which gay dreams and agreeable reveries supersede the faculty of thinking.

Siout is about 270 miles above Cairo, and may contain 25,000 souls. The number of villages I distinguished between the two cities were, on the western side of the Nile 228, on the eastern 160.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### SIOUT TO DENDERA.

**T**RAVELLING from Siout to the south, we found, at the distance of every mile and a half, small monuments of hospitality, with wells, at which we could allay the thirst of men and animals. These are built by pious and charitable individuals, and are called Caravanserais in the desert. The edifice generally consists of a cistern, the first motive of the institution, a watering trough, a fountain, two chambers, and an open gallery; the furniture, of some pots and mats. It has no owner, and there is none to levy contributions for the use of it. It belongs, for the time, to the first occupier; and this is not attended with inconvenience in a country where travellers are few, and journies of any length are always performed in large parties.



In crossing the desert on the west of the Nile, we passed a Coptic monastery called the White Convent, from the colour of the stone with which it is built. The erection of this building is attributed to Helena, the mother of Constantine, and, to judge by the plan, this is probably true. It is situated on the edge of the desert, but commanding a view of the rich country. The exterior of the edifice is very simple. The cornice and the gates resemble the Egyptian style; and this resemblance is augmented by the long flat top, and the sloping angles; for this building of the fourth century, like those of twenty centuries before it, partakes somewhat of the pyramidal form; all the angles sloping upwards, and making the summit smaller than the base.

To the south of Siout, I crossed the river to see a beautiful portico at Gawa Kebirè, on the eastern side. It is composed of eighteen columns in three rows, supporting a flat roof, with a cornice, which is covered with hieroglyphics. The plinths of the columns are square; the shafts have hieroglyphics in three compartments, one over another; the capitals are not unlike balustrades. Vast stones are seen about this portico; one, 30 feet long, and 5 broad; another 21 feet long and 8 broad.

Opposite to Taahta, which is a town on the western side of the Nile, about thirty-six miles south of Siout, is a mountain called Jibbel Heredy, from a Turkish saint, who was transformed into a snake, has lived several hundred years, and is to live for ever. An enlightened European traveller very gravely says he does not believe it: on such a subject every man must judge for himself.

A little to the south-west of this mountain, I came to Achmim, a city about a mile to the east of the



river. It is large and well situated; but the mountains, which encircle it on three sides, render the heat intolerable. The streets are broader and straighter than in most of the Arab towns, and the bricks at the corners of the houses are burnt. Chemmis was the Egyptian, and Panopolis the Greek, name of this city. Remains of the ancient city are still to be seen near the modern town. Enormous masses of stone, marked with Egyptian hieroglyphics, and Greek inscriptions, are overthrown and scattered.

At Achmim is a monastery of Italian monks, of the Society de Propaganda Fide; from the Superior General of which mission at Cairo, I had a letter, recommending me to every assistance in their power. A coxcomb of a monk heard me with disdain, read the letter of his superior with a smile of contempt, and reclined on his sofa without speaking or looking at me.

Fearing to lose my patience, I quitted the monk, and descended to the court-yard of the convent, where my baggage had been thrown down, and was still lying. I sent to seek a lodging in the city; and as the search was tedious, I remained, waiting the event, till the afternoon, without seeing any person belonging to the house; nor did any one make his appearance when my camels were loaded, and I left the place. I afterwards had a letter, in which it was said in Italian, that if my Illustrious Lordship had not been received with the honours due to my condition, it was a mistake. It appeared clear to myself, beyond the possibility of mistake, that I had not been received at all.

At Achmim I dined with a Copt called *Malim*, or *Master, Soliman*. His sons-in-law and other relations waited at table, for sons will at no time sit

down before their parents in this country, unless they are three or four times desired to do so.

The lands in the environs of Achmim are remarkable for fertility, and produce some of the finest corn in Egypt.

From Achmim I visited Girgé [pronounced Jirga] to the south of the former city, and on the opposite, or western side of the Nile. It is a modern town, about a quarter of a mile from the river, the banks of which are here steep and lofty. It is as large as Miniet, but less than Siout, and less beautiful than either. It is only interesting as being the capital of the Saïd, or Upper Egypt; the residence of the governor, who is one of the Beys; as being situated half way between Cairo and Syene, the southern extremity, or about 300 miles from each; and in a very rich territory. The country on both sides of the Nile, from Achmim to Girgé, is one continued grove of palm trees, in which are villages at a small distance from each other. The Copts maintain a bishop here, and the Arabs have an emir.

At Girgé I met with a Nubian prince, brother to the King of Darfûr, who was bringing to Cairo gold-dust and elephant's teeth, to barter for coffee, sugar, shawls, cloth, lead, iron, senna, and tamarinds. This young man was lively, gay, impetuous, and clever, all of which qualities were shewn in his physiognomy. His colour was deeper than bronze; his eyes very fine, and well set; his nose small, and somewhat turned up; his mouth very wide, but not flat; and his legs, like those of all the Africans, bowed and lank.

He told us that Timbuctoo was to the south-west of his country, that its inhabitants came to trade with his people, and were six months on their journey

to Darfûr, where they purchased the articles he took back from Cairo, in exchange for gold-dust. He added, that in his language Timbuctoo was called The Paradise, and that the inhabitants were small of stature, and mild in disposition. He further told us, that in his country the succession of the royal family was elective, and that after the death of a king, the civil and military chiefs chose from among his sons, him whom they thought most worthy to succeed him. This interesting stranger was perfectly well inclined to tell us all he knew, and expressed himself with great ease and energy.

It is surprising how much the Egyptians do with their fingers, the instruments to which they are commonly reduced; and with their feet, which wonderfully assist their hands. As workmen, they have one recommendation, which is, that they are patient and unassuming, and ready to repeat their work till it is done to the satisfaction of their employer. They are eminently sober, and as active on their legs as couriers.

The Felahs, or country people, are Egyptians, not Arabs, though some of the villages are in the possession of the Arabs. The Felahs are a slothful and ignorant people, but artful and cunning. They are chiefly employed in tilling the ground.

Above Girgé the climate sensibly alters. Though below that city the sun asserts his empire while he is present, his place, when he has quitted the horizon, is not supplied by the drying heat of the narrow valley of the Thebaïs.

On the afternoon of the day after I left Girgé, I arrived at Furshout, which is situated in a large plain sown with wheat, and nine miles from the foot of the western mountains. There are likewise plan-

tations of sugar canes on the banks of the river. At Furshout is another colony of Italian monks, and I was provided with the same recommendation to them which had been of so little use to me at Achmim; but this time I left my servants and baggage without the city, and proceeded to the convent alone. A servant refused me admittance; and when I desired him to deliver my letter from the Superior General at Cairo, he would not take charge of it. Weary of applying to monks, I tore the letter, and left the convent.

I sent one of the people of the country, who attended me, to seek for a lodging. I waited for his return more than three hours, exposed to excessive heat, and an atmosphere filled with dust; when my indignation giving way to my wants, I sent to the monks to request they would point out a house which I might be permitted to enter. The Superior returned with my servant, and begged me to accept of his. I did not refuse the offer, and I found the exterior, at least, of courteous hospitality.

On quitting Furshout, I embarked upon the Nile, and was going to push the boat from the shore, when the Cashef of Basjoura, a neighbouring town, detained it for his own use. I had met at Furshout a merchant whom I had known at Cairo, and who offered to conduct me to an Arab prince, whose little city was six miles distant from the Nile. I found him alone, in one of his gardens, seated under the shade of orange trees which perfumed the air, and on the brink of some little rills which cooled it.

The moment the prince perceived me at a distance, he stood upright, and when I quitted him he did the same, which was a rare mark of respect. I solicited his interposition in my favour. He made me eat



some delicious grapes, and drink lemonade, and he sent immediately to the Cashef, who relinquished the boat in consequence of his message. I presented the Arab prince with some bottles of liqueurs, some medicines, and some Cairo brandy; and in return, he furnished me with letters to several Arab Sheiks, and ordered provisions to be sent on board my boat.

When I reached the shore, it appeared that though I had happily got rid of the master, I had yet to dispute with the man. A Mamelúk, who commanded at the port, under the Cashef of Basjoura, now wanted my boat, and made us get on shore, and ordered our baggage to be landed. I shewed him the letters of the Beys. He said he laughed at all the Beys; they were only masters at Cairo, but he was master at Sahet, the port of Furshout.

When I had sent for my camels, intending to load them and proceed by land, this great man informed me that for a sequin he would give up the boat. I assured him that I would not give him a medina. He then reduced his demand successively to a pataka, half a pataka, and a quarter of a pataka, which last, at his earnest entreaty, I gave him.

Some hours had passed in this altercation, and in that time the Cashef had been informed of the proceedings of his deputy, and had sent him a reprimand, with an order to restore the money he had extorted. He entered my boat as humble as he had before been insolent, and left it very well pleased, for I allowed him to carry off the fourteen pence.

At some distance beyond Sahet, I first saw a crocodile. He was motionless in the middle of the river, his head only appearing above the water.



## CHAPTER IX.

## TENTYRA.

**D**ENDERA is a considerable town at this day, situated about half a mile to the west of the river, and covered with thick groves of palm trees. An Emir, or Prince of the Arabs, governs the town and the country around it, paying a tribute to the Beys. I presented to him letters from the Beys, and from his neighbours the Sheiks of Furshout, and of the orange grove, and met with a most gracious reception. He offered me the means of visiting the remains of Tentyra in safety; and on one of his people expressing some distrust of my motives for exploring these ruins, he said, "The ancestors of the Franks were the possessors of these countries, and respect for the memory of their forefathers is their motive for examining the monuments they have left." The following morning I found the Emir and his son, with three beautiful horses, waiting to conduct me to the ancient city of Tentyra.

Tentyra was built on the borders of the desert, on the lowest level of the Lybian chain, the foot of which is washed by the waters of the inundation of the Nile, at the distance of three miles from its bed. The ruins extend about a mile from east to west, and half a mile from north to south.

In the midst of a gloomy heap of ruins and rubbish, I saw a gate, built of enormous masses, and covered with hieroglyphics; and through this gate-

I had a view of the temple. Nothing can be more simple, or better composed, than the few lines that form this architecture. Order and simplicity are the principles which were followed by the Egyptians, and they have carried them to sublimity. At this point they have stopped, and have been so careful to preserve the unity of design, that though they have loaded the walls with bas reliefs, inscriptions, and scientific and historical representations, not one of these rich additions intersects a single line of the general plan. The sumptuous decorations, which appear to the eye when close to the building, vanish at a short distance, and leave to view only the grand elements of architectural composition.

What power, what riches, what superfluity of means, must a government possess, that could erect such an edifice, and find within itself artists capable of conceiving and executing such a design! Never did the labour of man shew me the human race in such a splendid point of view! In the ruins of Tentyra, the Egyptians appeared to me to be giants!

On casting my eyes on the cielings, I perceived zodiacs, planetary systems, and celestial hemispheres, in tasteful arrangement. I saw the walls covered with groupes of pictures, exhibiting the religious rites of these people, their labours in agriculture and the arts, and their moral precepts. I observed the Supreme Being every where depicted by the emblems of his attributes; and I had but a few hours to examine what it had been the work of ages to execute. Every part is so equally finished that they seem all to have been done by the same hand. There appears neither negligence, nor more exalted genius; uniformity and harmony prevail throughout.

There are four sorts of hieroglyphics. I imagine the two most ancient to be those that are only simple outlines, either scratched or cut very deep; the next in age, those in a shallow relief, raised above the surface; and those which belong to a more improved æra, and are executed perfectly at Tentyra, such as are hollowed, and in the middle of the hollow the figure rising in relief to the level of the outline.

The temple of Tentyra is broader in every angle at the base than at the top, and perfectly flat on the roof. The mud huts of the village of Demichalat, on the left bank of the Rosetta branch of the Nile, are still of the same form.

The temple of Tentyra is in the form of an oblong square. The front is 132 feet in length, the sides nearly 255. The front is elevated 70 feet above the ground; but at the back, accumulated heaps of sand and rubbish have formed a gentle ascent to the top. Enormous pillars, 21 feet in circumference, sustain a large vestibule. Their capitals are formed of four human heads with bats' ears, placed back to back against each other. These are surmounted by a square block, whose front projects beyond the heads, and has some resemblance to a pannel. The roof is formed of large stones, laid from one pillar to another, or on two partition walls. Some of these masses are 18 feet long and 6 broad.

The interior of the edifice is divided into several halls, the walls of which are covered with hieroglyphics, and symbolical figures, and the columns have their share. In an apartment nearly square, a human figure of monstrous proportions and attitude runs along three sides of the cieling; the body filling the middle side; the thighs, legs, and feet forming one angle with the body, and the arms, hands, and

fingers another, filling two of the other sides of the room. Every side is of equal length, and each more than eleven feet. The head hangs down between the upper part of the arms.

The celestial planisphere occupies part of the ceiling of this apartment, which is built over the nave of the great temple. Behind this room is a second, which receives light only through the door, and is covered with most interesting, and admirably executed representations. Those on the ceiling appear to relate to the heavenly bodies, and those on the walls have probably some reference to the earth, air, and water. The earth is universally represented by the figure of Isis, who was the presiding divinity at Tentyra, whose head it is which forms the capitals of the columns, and whose figure appears in every part.

There are neither doors nor hinges to those gates which once concealed the mysteries of the priests, and perhaps the treasures of the state. The chambers consecrated to eternal night, and impervious to strangers, were left open when Cambyzes had violated the sanctuaries and carried off the treasures.

The colours of the ancient Egyptians are incorporated with the stone in a manner that our researches have not enabled us to discover, nor our knowledge of the arts to imitate. The ceiling of the temple of Tentyra retains a bright azure, and the figures in relief upon it, a beautiful yellow, which leave our freshest colours at a distance.

A village of wretched huts had been built on the roof of the temple, as a basis more firm than the moving sands or marshy soil in the vicinity; but this was now deserted, and its ruins of hardened mud formed a singular contrast with the magnificent temple of Tentyra.



At Dendera I saw hundreds of crocodiles. If the Tentyrites were as keen hunters of crocodiles as ancient historians say, they could no where have better sport than before their own city. The present inhabitants heed them not; for they drive their flocks and herds into the river, where they stand for hours; and women who fetch water, remain in it, up to their knees, for a considerable time.

The habits of the crocodile are unknown in Egypt. I have seen these animals from three to twenty-eight feet in length; and have been assured by persons worthy of credit that they had seen one of forty. They are by no means so ferocious as is pretended. The small boat in which I sailed on the river was often surrounded by crocodiles, on a level with the water; and they saw us pass by with indifference, discovering neither fear, nor any hostile intention. The noise of a musket shot was alone able to disturb their tranquillity. Their favourite resorts are the low islands of the river, where they lie basking in the sun, asleep, and motionless as so many logs. Daring, even to imprudence, the French soldiers set them at defiance; and I myself bathed daily in the Nile, regardless of a danger which I never knew verified by a single fact.

I had seven young crocodiles brought me, which were hatched two days before; they were eleven inches long, and their teeth very sharp. The Egyptian who shewed them to me said that they were about fifty in number; but that he could seize no more, because the mother arrived, and was eager to attack him. General Belliard had a young crocodile in his possession, which was only six inches in length, and already began to shew its native ferocity. It lived four months, without eating, or appearing



to suffer; without growing larger, or becoming leaner; and to the last, it was as untractable as ever.

At Dendera I first saw the doom palm, which differs from the date palm in having from eight to fifteen stems, instead of a single one. Its fruit is attached by clusters to the extremities of the principal branches, from whence proceed numerous tufts which form the foliage of the tree.

At Dendera the valley of Egypt is not above five miles in breadth.

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## CHAPTER X.

### DENDERA TO THEBES.

ON the western bank of the Nile, about twenty-two miles above Dendera, is the town of Ballas, famous for the manufacture of earthen jars, which are sent down the river on rafts. These are made of a fine, compact, soapy marl, and are sold so cheap that they are sometimes used to construct the walls of houses; but their general use is to contain the water of the Nile; which, for drinking, is put into these jars with a few sweet almonds, slightly bruised: and in a few hours all the heterogeneous matter settles to the bottom, leaving the water clear and limpid. When it has been thus purified, it is poured into small drinking-cups, formed of clay, dried, but not baked or glazed; through the pores of which it trans-

udes, and is, by this continued evaporation, kept admirably cool.

The jars of Ballas have two handles, and the bottom almost terminates in a point, so that they cannot stand upright. This inconvenient form has descended from remote antiquity; for a jar exactly similar was found by a European traveller among the ruins of Tentyra; and I have seen jars represented of the same form, standing on the same tripods, and employed for the same purpose, in hieroglyphical paintings.

Nine miles above Ballas, and on the same side of the Nile, is situated a small town called Negadé, where there is a manufacture of blue cloths, which diffuses a degree of comfort over the place. I had a letter from one of the Beys to Ismaïn Abou Ali, an Arab Prince, who was then encamped near Negadé and I presented myself before his tent the morning after my arrival.

Ismaïn was a little old man, very ugly, and quite infirm, wrapped in a woollen great coat, very dirty, and torn to tatters, which he half unfolded every instant to spit upon his cloaths. His beard, which must have been blanched by time, was dyed red with henna, which, added to his wrinkled and faded visage, produced a hideous effect. He was sitting in his open tent; a concourse of Arabs, and inhabitants of the country, standing before him. He listened to them with attention, while he was dictating to his secretaries, and gave his decisions with surprising clearness and regard to justice.

I remained some time before the tent, and when Ismaïn had dispatched the most important affairs, he asked me in a tone of voice not very prepossessing, who I was. I approached him, and delivered the

letter of the Bey. When he had read it, he extolled the kindness of his friend in having sent him a physician who was able to cure all his disorders; and it appeared they were not a few. The most pressing, however, and that which was to be attacked first, was the weakness attendant upon age. To lose no time in effecting a cure of such importance, the old Arab proposed to take me with him, in a tour he was making through his different lands, and said he would begin with my restoratives by the way.

After the prince had communicated his plan, he resumed the course of his business, and I retired to the shade of a grove of trees, where a sumptuous dinner was served up for me, and where my favour with the prince procured me numerous attendants. But the commands of Ismaïn occupied my mind. I was conscious that I did not possess the gift of miracles, and I knew that nothing else could enable me to satisfy him. One way only remained; the prince was asleep, and I returned to Negadé.

On awaking, the thoughts of the prince were unfortunately turned towards me, and he cried with all his might, "Fen hakem?" "Where is the physician?" When he was informed that I was at Negadé, he ordered me to be sent for, saying, that as the Bey had sent me to him, I was his, and must not quit him. Sheep, and provisions of every kind, followed the messenger.

It would have been imprudent to refuse to obey the call of Ismaïn: I therefore only begged his permission to remain at Negadé a few days; hoping in that time to discover some method of making my escape from the dangerous honour of being physician to an Arabian prince.

The Superior of the Convent of Negadé had been

informed of the intentions of Ismaïn Abou Ali respecting me; and as he had himself been his physician, he perceived with uneasiness that the post was destined for another. While I was perplexing myself to find out some expedient which might rescue me from the favour of a prince, whom it did not suit me to follow or to serve, the monk was directing all his thoughts to the same object. He went secretly to Ismaïn, and assured him that I was not a physician, but a soldier in disguise; that my remedies might poison, instead of curing him; and that he himself had lately discovered some medicines which could not fail to restore him to health and vigour.

Had such a representation as this been made to one of the Beys, it had probably cost me my head; but an Arab, whom I had served in quality of a physician, and who related to me the story, told me that Ismaïn heard it with apparent indifference. I heartily rejoiced at the service that the hypocritical monk had rendered me, and he never lavished his attentions so plentifully upon me as after his vile defamation.

When I presented myself before the tent of Ismaïn, he made me sit by his side, while the monk stood unheeded before him; but he no longer urged my stay. I acted as if I had not been claimed as his physician; only requesting his letters of protection to the different Sheiks under his command. He ordered these to be made out immediately; and I left to the reverend physician the task of restoring him to youth, and pursued my travels in Upper Egypt.

The Franks are despised in Lower Egypt; but are considered with horror in the Saïd. Missionaries

came from Italy to preach against the Copts, to call them heretics, and to damn them without pity : they naturally incurred the hatred of the Copts, who now imagine that all Europeans come to their country to insult them.

The men of Thebaïs are still grosser and more barbarous than those of Lower Egypt, and as we advance to the south, their skin becomes more dusky. The catholic women, like the Turkish and Coptic, conceal their faces with a thick veil, and are cloistered up in their own houses. They are distinguished from the Mohammedan, by wearing one, or more, hoops of gold or silver through the nostrils, which are pierced for that purpose. Some of these hoops are very large, and have small ornaments of gold added to them.

The Beys and Cashefs have each a name given them, which is either an honourable title or a nick name ; and which, as it is changed according to circumstances, may be alternately glorious or ridiculous.

Produce of every kind is greater in Upper, than in Lower Egypt. The sower follows the plough, and scatters in the furrow just as much grain as is necessary ; without leaving, as is the custom of English farmers, any for the birds. The plough covers it, in tracing another furrow, and not a single grain is lost.

The rams of Upper Egypt are large, and are loaded with a thick fleece. Their skins are used for beds by most of the Egyptians. One of these skins, long and broad enough to serve a man as a mattress, sold for the value of twenty shillings ; while such an animal alive, but divested of its fleece, sold only for six.



Both man and beast are cruelly tormented by flies. No idea can be formed of their obstinate rapacity in fixing on the human body. It is in vain to drive them away; their perseverance wearies out the most patient spirit. The houses of the Egyptians are also filled with a multitude of bugs, whose bites are exceedingly painful. Covered over with these vile insects, they sleep profoundly; their hard thick skin being an invulnerable shield; while that of an European is no defence against the merciless attacks.

An insect not less disgusting annoyed me during the whole of my journey through Upper Egypt; the inhabitants, even of the better order, are covered with lice. When they are bitten by one of these, they take it carefully, and place it on the sofa upon which they are sitting, from whence it soon crawls either to their own person again, or to that of another. Whatever precaution I could take, I was obliged to submit to the torments inflicted by these hateful insects, which are here large and uncommonly voracious.

From Negadé, I crossed the Nile to Keneh, a village on the edge of the desert, opposite to the defile which leads to the port of Cosseir, on the Red Sea; and from Keneh I proceeded southward to Kous, which is also situated at the entrance of an opening of the desert, leading to the same place. In my way between these two towns, I observed on my left the ruins of Coptos, famous in the fourth century for its commerce with the East. Heaps of ruins point out the extent of the city; and all that remains of it is as dry and uninhabited as the desert on the border of which it is situated. The country on the south of Kous is still beautiful; and its numerous gardens, and immense plantations of melons,

must render it delicious to thirsty travellers, who have crossed the desert from Cosseir. In the middle of the square at Kous appears the summit of a large and well-proportioned gate, sunk in the ground to the cornice. This fragment seems larger than all the rest of the town.

Kenéh has succeeded Kous, as Kous succeeded Coptos, in the route of the Red Sea. It has this advantage over both, that it is on the bank of the Nile, as well as at the entrance into the desert; but it has never been so flourishing as either; because it did not exist till after the commerce of India had been diverted by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope. Its trade is now confined to the great caravan which passes from Upper Egypt, the Wahs, and a part of Nubia, to Mecca.

When the Mokha coffee arrives from Cosseir it is so fragrant that one of my trunks which was filled with it retained the perfume for years; but to have it in this state, it must not go to Cairo; or even pass into the hands of the merchants of that city, who are waiting to receive it at Kenéh and Kous. These people mix it with the coffee of the West Indies; at Alexandria it undergoes a second mixture; and in Europe a third; so that the Mokha coffee of the shops is about two thirds of West Indian growth, and one third the genuine coffee of Yemen. At Kous, I bought unadulterated Arabian coffee for ten-pence halfpenny a pound.

On leaving Kous, I again embarked on the Nile; and in making a sharp turn round the point of a projecting chain of mountains, I discovered, all at once, the site of the boasted city of Thebes, in its whole extent. This ancient and celebrated city is about 410, or 420, miles from Cairo.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THEBES.

AT a glance, Thebes presents, on the right, mountains, excavated and sculptured; on the left, temples, which, viewed at a distance, appear like so many rocks. The situation of Thebes is as fine as can be imagined, and the extent of its ruins convinces the spectator that fame has not magnified its size; for the breadth of Egypt not being sufficient to contain it, its monuments rest upon the two chains of mountains which are contiguous; while its tombs occupy the vallies on the west, which penetrate into the desert.

The ruins of Thebes extend about nine miles along the river; and east and west on both sides of the river, a breadth of about seven miles and a half. The Nile is here about 300 yards broad; the circumference of Thebes therefore must have been about 27 miles. The largest portion stood on the eastern side of the river.

Karnac is a miserable village on the eastern side of the Nile, built on a small part of the site of a single temple of Thebes, which ancient historians, who saw it in its ruined state, seem to have described in its present condition. It is the largest ruin in the world. At Karnac, not only quarries, but mountains, are piled together, and hewn out into massive proportions. The temples at Karnac and Luxor

were probably built in the early part of the Egyptian glory, when colossal edifices were the first consideration of opulence, and when it was not yet known, as it was afterwards at Tentyra, that perfection in the arts displays a grandeur independent of magnitude. The finest objects at Karnac are the obelisks, and some of the ornaments of the outer gates; but it must be granted that the plan was noble.

The ruins of the temple of Karnac extend nearly half a mile in length. There are eight grand entrances, to three of which were avenues of sphinxes, and to one of these entrances are four grand gates, placed successively behind each other. These gates consisted each of two prodigious masses of masonry, of a pyramidal form, with an entrance between the two. The first gate is of red granite, finely polished, and beautifully ornamented with hieroglyphics; on each side of this, there seems to have been colossal statues of granite, three of which remain, though one is without a head. The second gate is much ruined. The third has hieroglyphics all round; and here are the remains of a colossal statue of white marble, the head of which is five feet broad. The fourth gate is a heap of ruins, among which are some pieces of a statue of red granite; the trunk seven feet and a half broad.

Of the hundred columns of the portico alone of this temple, the smallest are seven feet and a half in diameter, and the largest are twelve. The portico itself is 170 feet in height, and 200 in breadth. Great part of the effect of this edifice, however, is lost by its present degraded state. The sphynxes have been wantonly mutilated, with a few exceptions which barbarism has spared. From these it is easy to distinguish that some had the head of a woman, others,

that of a lion, a ram, a bull, &c. The avenue which leads from Karnac to Luxor, and which is nearly a mile and a half in extent, contains a constant succession of these chimerical figures, on the right and on the left, together with fragments of stone walls, of small columns, and of statues. This was in the centre of the city.

The immense temple at Karnac is so full of fallen stones that in many points of view it appears like a work yard, wherein vast materials for building are collected, and only a part of the edifice is begun to be raised. The bas reliefs are probably some of the most ancient productions of the art of sculpture. I saw, among others, a hero, perhaps a Pharaoh, a Memnon, an Osymandyas, or a Sesostris, combating his enemies from his chariot, conquering them, leading them captive, and presenting them to his divinity.

I found that twenty-five minutes were required to encompass these buildings on horseback, on a full trot; and I am convinced that a week's application would not be too much to construct a plan of the edifices comprehended in this circuit. Within it was contained, not only the great temple, but three other edifices entirely distinct from it, each having its own gates, porticos, courts, avenues, and boundary wall. These may all, from their distribution, be regarded as appendages to the great temple. Probably the vast circuit of these buildings was occupied by numerous colleges of priests, the depositaries of the science and the power of the country.

The taste and ornaments of later times may bow down before these prodigies of Egyptian architecture; I could almost have bowed down before them myself.

From Karnac, I proceeded to Luxor, by the avenue



of sphynxes which connected the two temples, and which I could trace for more than half the distance. No city whatever makes so proud a display on approaching it as the wretched village of Luxor, where two or three thousand souls have taken up their residence on the roofs, and beneath the colonnades, of a temple of Thebes.

The temple of Luxor is not so large as that of Karnac, but it is in a better state of preservation. The stone is of a rich golden colour. The most gigantic parts consist of fourteen columns that are 31 feet in circumference, and now about that height above the ground, including the capital; and of two statues of granite at the outer gate, with two obelisks in front of them. The statues are buried up to the middle of the arms, and are still, including a high cap, thirteen feet and a half above the ground; so that if the figures are standing, they must be about 50 feet in height; if sitting, about 34. These colossi are of rose-coloured granite, and are much worn and decayed; but the parts which remain shew that they had been completed in the most laboured manner. The custom of piercing the ears was practised by the ancient Egyptians, as the ears of these statues still bear the impression.

The two obelisks are probably the finest in the world. They are also of rose-coloured granite, which has retained its polish, and is incomparably beautiful. They are still 70 feet above the ground, and to judge by the depth to which the figures appear to be covered, we may reckon about 30 buried in the sand, making in all 100 feet. They are seven feet and a half on every side at what is now their base. Their preservation is perfect; the hieroglyphics with which they are covered are cut deep, and

in relief at the bottom, and shew the bold hand of a master, and a beautiful finish.

The temple of Luxor was erected at different times, and it is surprising that the successive architects have been able to preserve the *vast*, even in the subordinate works of this mighty edifice. It is evident that the gate is of older date than the statues and obelisks which are placed before it.

As I was sitting on the ruins, contemplating the objects before me, the Sheik of Luxor asked me whether it was the English or the French that had erected the temple.

The heat was so intense that my feet were scorched through my shoes; and the very stones were so hot, that in gathering some cornelian agates, which are here found in abundance, I was obliged to throw them into my handkerchief as hastily as if they had been hot coals.

I now crossed the Nile to examine Thebes on the western side of that river, and complete the circuit of the ancient capital of the world. Adjoining the village of Medinet Abou, at the bottom of the mountain, is a vast edifice, which I imagine to be of the highest antiquity, from the extreme simplicity of its ornaments, the irregularity of its outline, and the coarseness of its sculpture. It is covered with hieroglyphics cut six inches deep, without any relief. In the fourth century the Christians added four rows of pillars, and converted it into a church. The body of the temple is 200 feet in length.

At the second temple, two square pyramidal buttresses stand on the sides of an immense gate; and upon the inner wall are engraved, in two bas reliefs, the victorious combats of a hero, whose enemies are twenty-five times smaller than himself. At some

paces from this gate are the remains of an enormous Colossus, which is broken off about the middle of the trunk. The head is 6 feet broad, and 11 long, including the neck; the ear is 3 feet long. The breadth of the shoulders is 25 feet, which would give about 75 for the whole height. The figure is exact in its proportions, the style is indifferent, the execution perfect, the parts that are left still preserve their polish. One foot remains, which has been broken off, and is in perfect preservation. In the second court are the fragments of two statues of black marble, the heads of which are three feet and a half long.

This ruin, which is situated on the slope of the mountain, is so well preserved in the parts which are still standing, that it appears more like a new and unfinished building than one gone to decay. Several columns are seen to their very bases: their proportions are grand; but the style, though purer than that of the first temple of Medinet Abou, is not comparable to that of Tentyra.

By the help of candles I penetrated into the darkest recesses of the temple of Medinet Abou, and I discovered three small rooms, covered with bas reliefs, that had never seen the light. At the further end of the third, was a kind of stone cupboard, the hinges of which were still remaining. In such a place, in a room which was the innermost of three, and closed by three doors as strong as walls, one might have hoped to find some curious treasure; but I found nothing.

In the plain my attention was arrested by two large statues in a sitting posture, called the statues of Memnon. They are on a pedestal, or plinth, entirely plain; the pedestal to the north is 30 feet

by 17; that to the south, 33 feet by 19; and they are about 30 feet apart. The statues are in the proportion of from 50 to 65 feet in height. All that remains of them shews a severity of style and a straightness of position. The bas reliefs and small figures clustered round the seat of the southernmost of these figures, are not without elegance and delicacy of execution.

Between these statues was the famous one of Osymandyas, the largest of all the colossal figures. When Osymandyas caused this august resemblance of himself to be placed here, he had an inscription engraved on the pedestal, in which he defied the power of man to destroy it. The two statues still standing are doubtless those of the mother and son of this prince; that of the king himself has disappeared. The hand of time, and that of revenge for the vain defiance, seem to have united for its destruction; but the persevering eye of the lover of the arts, now accustomed to discriminations of this kind, discovered some portions of the figure in a shapeless block of granite which lies between the two statues, and is undoubtedly the remains of Osymandyas. These figures must have adorned the gate of some large edifice, the ruins of which are buried under the soil.

On the ancles and legs of the northern statue, are many inscriptions in Greek and Latin. Some of these are epigrams in honour of Memnon; but the greater number are the names of ancient and illustrious travellers, who came to hear the sound the statue was supposed to utter at sun-rising, and their testimony that they had heard it. However these votaries of Memnon might be mistaken in the sound, they certainly were in the statue; this being un-



questionably the representation of one of the family of Osymandyas. This statue has been broken off at the elbows, and has been built up with five tiers of stones; the other is formed of a single stone.

The necropolis of Thebes is situated on the lower range of the Lybian mountains, on an arid and desolate spot. Double and triple galleries for the reception of the dead, have been dug out on three sides of a square on the inclined plane of the mountain; the fourth side, which is the lower, has not been touched. There are regular entrances to the galleries of this subterranean city, and behind the galleries are sepulchral caves. These excavations attest the immense population of ancient Thebes; they are almost innumerable, and the three sides that they occupy of the square, are each nearly a mile and a half in length. At present they are the abode of the inhabitants of Kournu, and their numerous flocks.

Whenever the French army passed the caves of Kournu, they were saluted with javelins, showers of stones, and volleys of musquetry. At length the French general determined to punish the assailants. He intended to surprize them, but was discovered; and he saw the Sheik, followed by his people and their flocks, taking refuge in the desert. The French began to besiege each cave by lighting a fire before the entrance; they were resisted by stones and javelins; and the greater number of these retreats communicating with each other, the besiegers could only take four men, four women, eight children, and three hundred head of cattle.

Those who had fled into the desert wanted provisions, those who remained in the caverns wanted water; the French sprang a mine, and the inhabi-



tants of the caves began to parley. It was like treating with beings in the bowels of the earth; for the terms of accommodation were shouted through the rocks. They agreed, however, and peace was afterwards established between the hostile parties.

I was so fortunate as to gain the confidence of some of these Troglodytes, and under their guidance I penetrated the mysterious passages and windings of their subterranean labyrinths.

The first caverns were constructed without any magnificence. They consisted of a double gallery supported by pillars; and behind this, of one, and often two, rows of apartments, tolerably regular. As the height of these grottoes increased, they became more richly decorated with painting and sculpture, which was not surpassed by those which I afterwards saw in the desert, that are supposed to have been the sepulchres of the ancient kings. The sarcophagi here are less magnificent, and the situation of the caverns less secluded; as these immediately overlook the grand edifices of the city.

The sculpture in the caverns of Kournu was more highly finished than any I had seen in the temples; and I stood in astonishment at the perfection of the art, and the obscurity of the place in which it was exercised. Here I could judge of the style of these people in subjects that were neither hieroglyphic, historical, nor scientific; for these were representations of small scenes taken from nature, in which the stiff profile outlines of the Egyptian artists were exchanged for natural attitudes. Groupes of persons were given in perspective, and cut in deeper relief than I should have imagined any substance but metal could have been wrought. I saw here bas reliefs representing sports; such as rope-dancing,

and asses taught to play tricks, and rear on their hind legs. It required the presence of mummies to give one the idea that these excavations had ever been the depositaries of the dead.

After passing the apartments adorned in this elegant manner, we entered long and gloomy passages, which wound backwards and forwards in numerous angles, and seemed to occupy a great extent of ground. These were without any decoration; but they sometimes opened into chambers covered with hieroglyphics; and sometimes narrow paths branched from them which led to deep perpendicular pits, which we descended by resting our arms against the sides, and fixing our feet on steps that were cut in the rock. At the bottom of these pits, we found other ornamented apartments; and below these a new series of perpendicular pits and horizontal rooms; and lastly, after ascending a long flight of steps, we arrived at an open place, on a level with those we had first entered.

In the evening my guides and I parted, satisfied with each other, and with an appointment to meet the next morning.

The following day I was conducted to new galleries and new apartments, which were less winding than the others, and enjoyed day-light, a pure air, and a fine prospect. These were not different from the others in point of decoration. The rock was coated with a smooth stucco, on which were painted, in every colour, subjects of funeral processions. The figures of the gods were represented as being carried on litters by priests, with banners waving over their heads, and followed by personages bearing golden vases of different forms, coffers of various construction, loaves of bread, and victuals of several kinds.

Women marched in order, playing upon musical instruments; one groupe was composed of three singers following each other; one with a harp, one with a sort of guitar, the other, judging from the attitude, on a wind instrument which was obliterated.

Several fragments of mummies were brought me. I promised an unlimited reward to any person who should procure me one untouched; but the Arabs sell at Cairo the resinous substance which they find in the head and body of the mummies, and it is not possible to prevent their committing this violence.

A fine mummy which had been thus opened was brought me; and I was going to express my indignation against those by whom it had been violated, when I perceived in its right hand, and resting on its left arm, a roll of papyrus on which was a manuscript that I could never have seen without the mummy had been unswathed. The ancient Egyptians then had written books, as well as sculptured walls! I had perhaps the oldest book extant! I hardly dared to touch my treasure; I could not trust it out of my sight; and all the cotton of my bed was employed to wrap it up.

I made another search in the caverns of Kournu, in hopes of finding an unrifled mummy, and of discovering the manner in which they were placed in the tombs. After many painful and fruitless researches, we arrived at a hole before which were scattered numerous fragments of mummies. The aperture was narrow, and we looked at each other to ask whether we should venture in. We struck a light, and entered, crawling on our hands and knees; and having crept nearly a hundred yards, over a heap of dead and half decayed bodies, the vault became more lofty and spacious, and was decorated with a considerable degree of care.

We found that this sepulchre had already been searched ; and that those who had entered it having used burning bushes for lights, as is still the custom of the Arabs, had set fire, first to the linen, and then to the resin of the mummies ; causing such a combustion as to split some of the stones, and blacken the sides of the cave. We could observe, however, that this vault had been the burying place of two persons of consequence, whose figures, about seven feet in height, and holding each other by the hand, were sculptured in embossment. Above their heads was a bas relief representing two dogs, in a leash, lying on an altar, and two figures kneeling. Besides this apartment, there were lateral ones, unornamented, and filled with corpses, embalmed with more or less care, as they might probably have been the relations, and even servants of the principal persons.

Many bodies, swathed up, but without any coffin, were lying in regular order, close to each other : and I here discovered the reason why so many small figures of baked earth, holding a whip in one hand, and a bent staff in the other, are always found near the tombs ; for these rows of corpses were laid upon beds intirely formed of such little images. A number of bodies were not swathed up. The hair of the women was long and flexible, and the character of the head fine. I brought away with me the head of an old woman, a good deal resembling those of the Sybils of Michael Angelo. After this, we descended, not without some inconvenience, into several deep pits, in which we found more mummies, and long broad pots of baked earth, with covers representing human heads, and containing only a kind of resin.

It was across these humbler tombs that the kings were carried, six miles from their palace, into the



silent valley which was to be their lasting abode. This valley, to the north west of Thebès becomes narrower, and is inclosed between perpendicular rocks, which, towards the extremity, scarcely leave space enough to pass by the tombs.

Having ridden three quarters of an hour in this desert valley, we saw some doors with square frames, with an oval in the centre of the upper part, on which were inscribed a beetle and a man with a hawk's head; and, beyond the oval, two kneeling figures in the act of adoration.

As soon as the threshold of one of these gates is passed, we discover passages, 12 feet wide and 20 in height, cased with stucco, sculptured and painted. The vaulted ceilings are of an elegant elliptical form, and are covered with innumerable hieroglyphics, disposed with much taste, and forming a rich and harmonious association of colours. Four or five of these passages, one within another, and from 30 to 50 feet long, generally lead to a spacious room, in which is the tomb of the king. The sides and ceilings of the rooms are, some sculptured, and some painted with hieroglyphics, as fresh as if just finished. Only nine of the sepulchres of the Kings of Thebes can be entered, and I saw eight. One of those I visited is most beautifully cut and painted, and the tomb of the king is of one stone of granite 7 feet 9 inches high, 11 feet 8 inches long, and more than 6 feet broad. On the top, lies the figure of the king, swathed, except the head and feet, and accompanied with a written inscription.

In the great room at the extremity of another grotto, the tomb is taken away; but the slab of red granite which covered it remains. It is 11 feet long, and  $6\frac{1}{2}$  broad. In another, the tomb was 16 feet



high, 10 feet long, and 7 feet broad, of a single block of red granite. Its cover was still upon it, though broken on one side, and it had a figure in relief on the top.

Others of these sarcophagi were 12 feet long and 8 in breadth, ornamented with hieroglyphics both within and without, and rounded at one end, and squared at the other, like that in the mosque of St. Athanasius at Alexandria. They were covered by a lid of the same material, that is, red granite, of an enormous mass, and shutting with a groove; but they had all been violated by avarice.

Other sepulchral chambers were surrounded by a pilastered portico, with recesses supported in the same manner, and lateral rooms hollowed in the rock. All these were covered with a white and fine stucco, on which were painted hieroglyphics. The ceilings, exhibiting yellow figures on a blue ground, were executed with a taste that might adorn our most splendid mansions.

I was summoned away; when I discovered some small chambers. On the walls of one were represented different kinds of arms, such as coats of mail, tygers' skins, bows, arrows, quivers, pikes, javelins, sabres, casques, and whips. In another, was a collection of household utensils, such as caskets, chests of drawers, chairs, sofas, and beds; all of exquisite forms, and such as might well grace the apartments of modern luxury. Besides these there were various smaller articles; as vases, coffee pots, ewers with their basons, a tea pot, and a basket.

Another room was devoted to agriculture; and in it were represented a sledge, similar to those in use at present; a man sowing grain by the side of a canal, from which the inundation was beginning to

retire ; a field of corn being reaped with a sickle ; fields of rice, with men watching them.

In a fourth room, was a figure clothed in white, playing on a harp with eleven strings, ornamented, but made of the same kind of wood as the modern ones.—How was it possible to leave such precious curiosities ! I earnestly demanded a quarter of an hour's grace, and was allowed twenty minutes.

I found here some figures of divinities cut in sycamore wood, with uncommon elegance ; and a small foot of a mummy which did no less honour to nature than these to art. It was doubtless the beautiful foot of a young princess. The mystery and magnificence of these excavations, and the number of doors by which they are guarded, convince me that the religious worship which formed and ornamented them was the same that raised the pyramids.

At length, with great regret, I quitted these sepulchres, in which I had passed three hours ; and I found that a visit to Thebes was like a paroxysm of fever ; occasioning a degree of ardour, irritation, and fatigue.

During my stay at Thebes, I lodged successively in a temple and a cottage. In the latter we were closely confined. Rats of an extraordinary size shared it with us ; running over us, and biting us, as we lay stretched on our carpets. A tempestuous wind arose, and pieces of the hardened mud of which our cottage was composed beat upon us from its walls and ceiling ; till in the midst of a wind that deafened us, one of the walls gave way. Fortunately it burst outwards, and gave us an opportunity of escaping from our prison, and we walked half the night in the open air, with our muskets on our shoulders.

## CHAPTER XII.

HOT WIND, ESNEH, ETTU, MANNERS OF THE ARABS.

I HAVE not yet noticed the hot wind of the desert, termed by the Bedouins Simoom or Poison, from its quality, and by the Egyptians Kamsin, or fifty days, from its duration; as in Egypt they reckon that these winds prevail more frequently in the fifty days before and after the equinox. In whatever country these winds are felt, they always blow from a parched and arid desert.

The Kamsin is not at first so remarkably hot; but its heat increases in proportion as it continues. The rays of the sun are obscured by a burning vapour, and its orb appears of a pale colour. The heat may be compared to that of a large oven, at the moment of drawing out the bread. Every thing that has life is affected by it. The lungs are contracted and become painful; respiration is short and difficult; the skin is parched, and the body consumed by internal heat. In vain recourse is had to large draughts of water; in vain is coolness sought for; marble, iron, water are hot, and deceive the hand that touches them. The air is darkened by a fine invisible dust, which insinuates itself into trunks and boxes, mixes with the food; and, with the perspiration occasioned by the heat, forms a mask to the face.

During the stay of the English army in Egypt, the Kamsin raised the thermometer, at different places, to 105°, 120°, and 130°, in the shade. At

120°, the ground was heated like the floor of an oven, and poultry exposed to the air, died. The inhabitants of towns shut themselves up in their houses; those of the desert in their tents or caves. The Kamsin usually lasts three days; but if it exceed that time, it is insupportable.

The town of Esneh, the ancient Latopolis, which is situated on the western side of the Nile, contains the portico of a temple which appeared to me the most perfect monument of Egyptian architecture. It is situated near the bazar, in the great square. It is composed of eighteen columns, with large capitals, and possesses great richness of sculpture. It is covered with hieroglyphics within and without, which are executed in relief, and with great labour. Among other subjects, they exhibit a zodiac, and large figures of men with the heads of crocodiles: and, as a proof that the Egyptians borrowed nothing of their architecture from other people, it may be remarked, that all the ornaments which compose these capitals are taken from the produce of their own country; such as the palm tree, the vine, the lotus, and the rush. All behind the portico is destroyed or covered.

The French found the matchless portico of Esneh deformed by the most miserable hovels, and devoted to the vilest purposes; they ordered it to be cleared, and the inhabitants performed the work with great cheerfulness. A work still dearer to the learned world was performed by the French *Scavans*: they observed that in the zodiac sculptured on the ceiling of the portico of Latopolis, the vernal equinox was in Gemini, and the summer solstice in Virgo, which, by unerring calculations gives to this edifice an antiquity of 6,000 years. The zodiac in the temple of Tentyra has the summer solstice in Leo, which fixes

its date at 2,000. It is a circumstance worthy of remark, that when the Sepoys in the British service, who had arrived in Egypt from India, saw the divinities in the temple of Tentyra, they immediately worshipped them, and were very indignant against the Egyptians for their neglect of their gods. From Haw, a town north of Dendera, it is one day's journey and a half to Esneh by the desert, and six days by following the course of the Nile.

Etfu, the ancient Apollinopolis, is situated on the eastern side of the river. On my arrival at this place, I went to the house of the Sheik, and presented to him a letter which I had from the great Sheik of Furshout. He kissed the letter, and put it to his forehead as a mark of respect; and when I had made him a handsome present, and requested his protection while I visited the ruins of the temple, he put his hand to his head, signifying, "Your safety be upon my head." He accompanied me immediately to the temple.

I was struck with the situation of the ancient Apollinopolis Magna, which commanded the whole breadth of the valley of Egypt; and with its magnificent temple, towering above the rest, so like a citadel that it is known to the inhabitants by the name of the *Fortress*. The extent, majesty, and high preservation of this temple surpassed all I had seen in Egypt, and made an impression as great as its own gigantic dimensions. The temples of Thebes may exceed it in size, and the temple of Tentyra may excel it in detail; but it possesses more beauty than the former, and more grandeur than the latter.

The temple of Apollinopolis at Etfu commences with two huge pyramidal mounds of building, ornamented with three rows of human figures, one above



another, increasing in gigantic dimensions, so that the uppermost is twenty-five feet high. Between these mounds, is the gate which leads to the interior of the edifice. Beyond this, a court, with columns; then an inner portico, supported by three rows, one behind another, of magnificent columns, six in each row.

Then succeed different apartments, and the sanctuary of the temple: Every part of the edifice, even to the wall which surrounds the whole, is covered with hieroglyphics.

After having viewed the temples of Tentyra and Apollinopolis, and the portico of Latopolis, I am surprised that the world has allowed the Greeks, on their own assertion, the merit of being the inventors of architecture. In my opinion, they had not even that of improving it.

The Egyptian sculptors observed an equality of care in all the parts of a vast whole; a minute exactness of execution, and perfect finish; the fruits of that inflexible perseverance which characterizes the monastic spirit, whose zeal neither perishes nor cools, and whose pride is not individual, but corporate. Probably the artists themselves were a constituent part of the colleges of priests, and employed their whole lives in ornamenting their temples. Obelisks, columns, and different parts of these edifices, were the pious gifts of princes and great men.

Among all the splendid remains of antiquity, Egypt contains nothing but temples and tombs. The monuments tell us only that the ancient Egyptians were the slaves of priests, and that they died.

The excellent preservation of the temple of Apollinopolis forms a wonderful contrast with the grey ruins of modern habitations built within its vast

inclosure. Huts which are raised in the courts, and around the temple, like martin's nests on our houses, defile them, without injuring their general appearance.

Before I had finished my examination of the temple, a number of people assembled round me; and one of them, who, I understood, was the nephew of the Sheik, snatched a book, in which I had been making memoranda, out of the hand of one of my servants, and ran away with it. The Sheik instantly threw off his upper garment to enable him to make the greater speed, and ran after him. It was well he did not overtake him; as his people said he would probably have killed him, if he had. The Sheik conducted me to his house, and provided for me a very large bowl full of thin cakes, broken into small pieces, and mixed with a syrup extracted from the sugar-cane when green; not eating with me, but seating himself at a distance. In the mean time, I was privately informed that for about the value of a crown, I might have my book again. I gave the money: my book was restored, and I took leave of the Sheik. In about an hour, his son came riding after me, to let me know that his father had been informed I had given money for the restitution of my book; that he had obliged the person to return it, and had sent it back to me by him.

Beyond Etfu the cultivated country grows very narrow, there being only three quarters of a mile between the desert and the river.

The next day we entered the desert, and no water could be found but in the Nile, which was three miles out of our way. Thirst prevailed, and we marched to the river, when we discovered that we had nothing to eat. A camel came up, laden with

butter, and, having purchased some of this, we shook our flour bags, and made some fritters; but our horses, who had no fritters, were not able to carry us, and we led them, supporting them with our hands. We were obliged to proceed; necessity alone made it practicable; and many are the resources contained in the single word, *necessity*.

Returning again to the river, we passed to the eastern side to view the large quarries of free-stone which probably supplied the material for those ancient edifices, which are our admiration at the present time. The spot is called Jibbel Silsilis. The mania of architecture among the Egyptians is every where seen in these quarries, which, having furnished the stone for other temples, became temples themselves. Here are porticos, with columns, entablatures, and cornices, covered with hieroglyphics, and cut out of the solid rock.

A great number of sepulchral caverns, containing small private chambers, are hollowed out of the mountain. The doors are decorated with jambes, covered with hieroglyphics, and surmounted by cornices, on which is an entablature with the winged globe. Each of these chambers contains one, two, or three, large seated sculptured figures. The rooms are ornamented with hieroglyphics traced on the rock, terminated with coloured stucco, representing offerings of bread, fowls, fruits, liquors, &c. The ceilings are also of stucco, and are adorned with painted scrolls, in an exquisite taste. The floor is inlaid with a representation of mummy cases, equal in number to the sculptured figures: those of men have small square beards, with a head-dress hanging down behind, over the shoulders; those of women have the same head-dress, falling down in front.

At all times the desert has been the asylum of death in Egypt, for even now the Egyptians carry their dead into the desert, sometimes to the distance of three leagues from their habitations, that the dryness of the sand may preserve the bodies from corruption.

Passing by the heights of Ombos, with the fine remains of antiquity on the summit, we travelled through new deserts on the western side of the Nile, where we found the traces of a grand antient road, bounded with large masses of hewn stone. This road led in a straight line to Assouan, whither we might have arrived the next day; but I crossed the water to visit the Sheik of the Ababdé Arabs, with whose son I had been acquainted, and by whom I had sent medicines to his father.

Sheik Ammer, the residence of the Ababdé chief, is a collection of villages composed of miserable huts, and containing about a thousand effective men. I was introduced to my patient, who was lying on a carpet in a corner of the hut, with a cushion under his head. After a great dinner and some friendly conversation, I asked Nimmer, that is, the Tyger, for so the chief was called, whether, if he, or any of his people, were to meet me in the desert, they would offer me any outrage: "No," said the sick old Arab, sitting upright on his carpet, and a more ghastly figure I never saw, "cursed be those of my people that shall ever lift up their hand against you, either in the desert or the cultivated ground. The night of relief from pain, which your medicines gave me, would not be repaid if I were to follow you on foot to Cairo. If you or yours should fly to any of us for refuge, we would protect you at the hazard of our lives and families, to the



death of the last male **child** among us." The priests and heads of the people were then summoned into the hut, and repeated the curse upon themselves if they did not fulfil the obligation.

Medicines and advice being given on my part, faith and protection pledged on that of the Arabs, two bushels of wheat and seven sheep were presented to me. To refuse a present is, in this country, as great an affront as to come in the presence of a superior **without** offering one. I told the Arabs, however, that I was going among the Turks, who were obliged by their orders to provide for me, and that to give me sheep would be to save theirs. "You and I, who are Arabs," continued I, "know what Turks are." My newly-sworn brethren muttered curses between their teeth at the name of Turk, and agreed to take back their sheep, on condition of presenting me with double the number on my return.

The principal Sheik of every tribe of Arabs receives the visit of every person who comes upon business. At all public assemblies he must give bread baked on the ashes, and sometimes sheep, kid, or camel. In a word, he keeps open table. On this depend his credit and his power. The hungry Arab ranks the liberality which feeds him above every virtue. Nor is this idea without foundation, for covetous men are never men of enlarged views. To provide for these expences, the Sheik has nothing but his flocks, a few spots of cultivated ground, and the **tribute** he levies on the high roads. A Sheik who has the command of five hundred horse does not disdain to bridle and saddle his own, or to give him barley and chopped straw. In his tent, his wife makes the coffee, kneads the dough, and dresses the victuals. His daughters and kinswomen



wash the linen, and go with pitchers on their heads to draw water from the fountain. These manners agree precisely with the descriptions of Homer, and the history of Abraham.

The commerce of the Arabs extends only to the exchanging of domestic animals for arms, clothing, rice, or corn. They are ignorant of all science; they have not a single book; their taste for literature is limited to such tales as the Arabian Nights' Entertainment; and in the evening they range themselves in a circle, with their pipes in their mouths, in silent meditation, till, on a sudden, one of them breaks forth with, "Once upon a time." He then recites the adventures of some young Sheik and female Bedouin. He minutely describes the beauty of the heroine; her eyes, large, black, and soft as those of the gazelle; her eye-brows like two bows of ebony; her waist, straight and flexible as a lance; her steps, light as those of a young filley; her nails tinged with the gold-coloured henna; and her words, sweet as honey. He recounts the sufferings of the lover, who is so wasted with passion that his body no longer yields any shadow. He details his various attempts to see his mistress, of whom he has once caught a glance, the obstacles opposed by the parents, the invasions of the enemy, the captivity of the lovers; and, finally, he restores them, united and happy, to the paternal tent; and receives from his auditors the tribute of his eloquence, "Ma cha Allah!"

After the French soldiers had defeated the armies of Upper Egypt, some of the women passed their time with ease and gaiety in the French camp, each making her choice freely among the soldiers. When they were returned to their husbands, the scrupulous jealousy of the orientals was laid aside. "They are

not dishonoured," said the men; "they submitted because we were unable to defend them."

Content, in general, with his milk and his dates, the hands of the Arab are not accustomed to slaughter, or his ears to the cries of suffering creatures, and he has preserved a humane and feeling heart. To irritate him, you must shed his blood, or that of one of his family, in which case he is as obstinate in his vengeance, as he was cautious in avoiding danger.

The Arabs have been often reproached with their spirit of rapine; but one circumstance has not been sufficiently attended to; that it only takes place towards reputed enemies, and is consequently founded on the law of nations. They inhabit a certain district; they regard it as their absolute property; you enter their territory, and they consider you as a lawless invader. Had you purchased their permission to pass through their country by a previous contract, they had been your faithful guides and protectors. In levying the tribute you ought to have paid, it is true they take too much; but in what country is the hand of power, when directed towards an enemy, restricted by justice?

Among themselves the Arabs are remarkable for good faith, distinterestedness, and generosity. A stranger, nay, even an enemy, touches the tent of a Bedouin, and, from that instant, his person is inviolable. Has the Bedouin consented to eat bread and salt with his guest, nothing could induce him to betray him. No power would be able to force a refugee from the protection of a tribe, but by its total extermination. The Bedouin, so rapacious without his camp, has no sooner set his foot within it, than he becomes liberal. He takes his repast before the door of his tent, and invites the passengers

in the name of God. The stranger sits down and dines; then rises, and returns his thanks, not to the person who invited him, but to the Being in whose name he was invited, saying, "God be praised." The generosity of the Arab is so sincere, that he does not look upon it as a merit, and therefore takes the same liberty with others.

If any one go to the house or tent of an Arab, bread is immediately made, and served with milk, eggs, a salt cheese like curds, or such other things as his situation affords. The Arabs think it a favour that you should enter their dwelling, and put yourself under their protection; and they are not pleased if you refuse to eat.

Nothing can be finer than the Arab manner of expressing civility and friendship. If the news be told of the death of any person, they say, "May your head be safe." And to a great man, when one of his enemies is killed or taken, they say, "May all your enemies be as this man is."

The Arabs in Egypt generally wear a large blanket, either white or brown, in winter, and a blue and white cotton sheet in summer, as an upper garment; and the poorer people, particularly the young about Faioume, had no other. They hang one corner over the left shoulder before, then wrap the cloth over the back, and bringing it under the right arm, they throw the opposite corner over the left shoulder behind.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## ASSUAN TO IBRIM.

ASSUAN is on the eastern side of the river. Its population is numerous; but it is only remarkable for being the last town in Egypt. The trade is confined to senna and dates. The latter are so plentiful that besides making the principal food of the inhabitants, large boats, laden with them, are daily going down the Nile to Lower Egypt. There are no other remains of the ancient town of Syene than a square temple, surrounded by a gallery, which is shattered and shapeless; but the vicinity abounds with fine monuments of antiquity.

The island of Elephantina, which is below Assuan, is little more than a mile long, and a quarter of a mile broad at the southern end, terminating in a point, which is a rock of red granite, on the north: but the cultivation, and the trees, are in such perfection, that it is called by the Arabian name of Kezi-ret el Sag, the Flowery Island. This island has doubtless been increased towards the north by alluvial soil; which, being perpetually watered by means of wheels and buckets, produces four or five crops yearly. The inhabitants are numerous, courteous, and in easy circumstances. With a few crowns I made the children happy, and gained the good will of the people, who offered me fragments of antiquity, and rough cornelians, for sale. This island alone is worth all the territory adjacent to the town of Assuan.

It is at the southern extremity of the Island of Elephantina that the Egyptian town, the Roman habitations, and the Arabian buildings, have successively been situated. The works of the Romans are now distinguished only by bricks and tessellated pavements; those of the Arabs by the dunghills with which they have covered the soil; while the monuments of the Egyptians remain. These are; a temple surrounded with a pilastered gallery, almost perfect, and covered within and without with hieroglyphics in relief, very well executed; another temple of the same form and size, but more in ruins; two frames of a large outer door, made of blocks of granite, and ornamented with hieroglyphics; and a fragment of a small and highly finished edifice.

Passing out of the south gate of Assûan, I entered a small sandy plain. The watery element seems to gush from the earth in different channels, and divides the river into many streams. A very little to the left are a number of tomb-stones, with inscriptions in the Kufic character, the only letter and language known to Mohammed, and the most learned of his sect in the first ages. One of these stones records the name of "Abdullah, born in Arabia Petrea;" another that of "Mohammed, the Slave of the Sun, born in Taref." These were officers in the army of Khaled Ibn el Waalid, whom Mohammed named "The sword of God," who took and destroyed Assûan, after having lost a great part of his army before it.

About a mile and a half from Assûan, we met with the quarries of granite from whence the blocks were taken that formed some of those colossal statues which have been the admiration of ages, and still strike the beholder with astonishment. It seems



as if the Egyptians wished to preserve a memorial of the masses which produced these prodigious blocks, by leaving on them hieroglyphics, which, perhaps, record the event. The means used to detach these pieces of rock were much the same as those employed at the present day. A cleft was first cut out, and then the whole mass split off by wedges, of different sizes, all struck in at one time. The marks of these operations are so fresh that one might imagine they had been performed yesterday; and the texture of the granite is so hard, that the rocks in the current are polished, instead of being worn, by the waters. The finest and most abundant is the rose-coloured granite.

Four miles and a half above the quarries, and six from the gate of Assûan, the rocks increase in the bed of the river, and form what is called the Cataract. Large blocks of granite, from 30 to 40 feet high, divide the water into a number of small channels, and the current endeavours to expand itself. Finding before it opposition from the rocks, and forced back by these huge obstacles, it meets the contrary currents, which creates an ebullition and disturbance that give the idea of confusion, but do not inspire terror. Such is the apparently insignificant bar which has put an end to the navigation of the Nile. When I saw it, the bed of the river was not half a mile broad. During the period of the inundation boats may pass the cataracts. The boys of the neighbouring huts dive into the most rapid of the falls at that time, and after disappearing for a few seconds, are seen again at the distance of forty or fifty yards below.

The road from Assûan to the cataract is over a sandy plain, where there are evident marks of its

having been a raised causeway. This was absolutely necessary in ancient times ; as the merchandize from Ethiopia was transported by land from the Island of Philoë, and reimbarbed at Syene. All the large blocks of stone we met with in the way were covered with hieroglyphics, as if for the amusement or information of the traveller. What a passion for sculpture ! Temples, caverns, even native rocks, loaded with it !

The road above the cataract passes through several small villages, containing a few houses, rocks, and patches of cultivated ground. To these are added tracts of sandy desert, and heaps of shattered cliffs. As we proceed, the rocks grow loftier, and on their summits are piled masses of granite, clustered together, and hanging in equipoise, as if done on purpose to produce the most picturesque effects. Through these rough and rugged forms, the eye all at once discovers the magnificent edifices of the Island of Philoë, separated by tufts of palm trees, or rocks which appear to be left merely to contrast the forms of nature with those of art, and to assemble in one spot all that is most beautiful. The traveller is struck with astonishment at finding on the frontier of Ethiopia, so many monuments, and of such grandeur.

The Island of Philoë is nearly 600 yards long and 120 wide. It contains a temple with pillars, the capitals of which are in the form of a goblet, surmounted with a quadruple head of Isis ; these support an architrave and cornice without a roof : behind this, a gallery 250 feet long, formed by pillars with wide capitals, almost all of which are different ; on the right of this, a row of cells, which may have been the chambers of the priests : beyond these, two sloping buttresses, each 47 feet in front, and 22 in

thickness, and between them a large and magnificent gateway: behind this, a court 85 feet by 45, with a gallery on each side formed by columns; beyond this, on the right, a range of cells 10 feet in depth, and on the left, two porticoes and three larger apartments: behind this court, two other sloping buildings, two thirds the size of the former, which serve as a kind of a lodge to the finest part of these edifices: this is a sort of portico, with ten columns and eight pilasters, as elegant as they are magnificent; the portico is at first open at the top, and afterwards covered with a ceiling. To this succeeds the closed part of the temple, which is 60 feet by 30, and divided into different compartments. All these edifices succeed each other in one continued range. The capitals are admirable in beauty and execution; on the buttresses are gigantic portraits of sovereigns, or emblematical figures of strength or power, threatening a groupe of suppliant figures, which they hold by the hair of the head. On the ceiling of the portico are painted astronomical pictures; on the walls, religious ceremonies, images, priests, and gods.

Besides the vast inclosure, in which so many temples and dwellings for the priests are connected together, are two small temples distinct from these and from each other, which surpass them all in beauty, and prove that it is character, not extent alone, which gives dignity to the Egyptian edifices.

I was here convinced of the truth of a remark I had made at Tentyra and Thebes; that the ancient Egyptians first erected large masses, and afterwards bestowed upon them the labour of ages; beginning their work with shaping the architectural lines, proceeding to sculpture the hieroglyphics, and conclud-

ing with the stucco and painting. All these distinct periods of execution are very obvious in the Island of Philoë.

Beyond Philoë the Nile is open and navigable; but its shore soon becomes impracticable for travellers. We saw a barren soil, left to itself, and, on the rocks, a few habitations which resembled the huts of savages. We entered a desert which cut an angle of the river, in order to shorten our way; and after having travelled several hours among deep and hollow vallies, the Nile again opened upon us through a ravine which led to Taudi, a village on the bank of the river.

The inhabitants had not time to hide themselves in the rocks, or swim across the water on our approach. The women are extremely ugly, and to us appeared sullen and stupid. The men seemed to be of another species. Their features were delicate, their skin fine, their countenance animated, their eyes and teeth admirable. Their colour, though black, is full of life and blood; but their muscles are only tendons, covered very sparingly with flesh, and perfectly without fat. They are lively and intelligent, quick in understanding, clear and concise in answering, and nimble in thieving.

At Philoë I embarked upon the river, and proceeded up it in a small boat. At the village of Debodé, which is situated on the western side, and ten miles distant from Philoë, I found a small temple with three gateways and four columns. An inclosed pavement has formerly led to it from the river. The Nile was a regular deep stream, washing the base of the mountains on both sides; but with here and there small cultivated spots, and plantations of date trees. At eighteen miles from Philoë and one from the

village of Siala, on the eastern side, we anchored for the night.

The captain of my boat here informed me that I must visit Douab Cashef, a Nubian Chief, who was encamped in the neighbourhood of Siala. On arriving at this encampment, we found the men in temporary huts, and the women and children in tents, apart. The whole number might amount to four hundred. Their horses and camels were feeding around them. I was provided with a letter of recommendation to the chief of the first tribe of Barábras I might happen to meet, and I presented it to Douab Cashef. He offered us coffee, made no objection to our proceeding up the river, and said he would dispatch a messenger to Hassan Cashef, to inform him of our intention to visit Dehr, his capital. He invited us to eat out of the same bowl with himself, and, in return for the tobacco and coffee I gave him, presented me with a sheep.

At the village of Deghimeer, which is three miles above Siala, and on the same side of the river, the mountains retire on both sides, and the banks, where any soil has been left, are cultivated. Five miles farther, on the western side, at the village of Sardab, we met with a large square inclosure formed by walls sloping from the angles to the middle of their height, with a gate in the centre of the north wall, pointing to a small elegant temple which is at the distance of 400 yards. Six beautiful columns are yet standing: two with capitals formed of heads of the goddess Isis, two of the lotus, and two of the vine.

Four miles above Sardab is the village called El Umbarakat. This appellation extends to both sides of the river, and seems here, as in many other places, to imply a district, rather than a village. We counted



twelve inclosures on the plain, like that at Sardab, but much smaller; these being only 50 feet square. We also saw two small temples, one of which is converted into a house. It is about 18 feet in length and breadth, and contains four beautiful columns three feet and a half in diameter. The country is thinly inhabited, and the natives live for the most part in caves in the mountains, which here approach the river and form a difficult pass.

Two miles above El Umbarakat we passed the island of Kalaptshi, and one mile above the island is the village of the same name, where an elevated stone pavement 18 feet in width, leads from the river to the ruins of a temple, which is in a state of great dilapidation. Eight miles beyond Kalaptshi we reached the village of Aboughor, where we anchored the second night.

Four miles above Aboughor, we passed the village of Dondour, on the eastern side of the river. Here is a small temple in good preservation, with hieroglyphics well executed in relief. In the cabin of our boat the thermometer stood at 86°, in the open air at 96°, and with the bulb buried in the sand, at 125°. A little higher up we were obliged to pass the night, being detained by contrary winds.

The following day we proceeded with the assistance of the tow line, and advanced about ten miles. At about half the distance, on the western side of the river, are the magnificent remains called Guerfeh Hassan, a temple excavated in the rock, which is a stupendous monument of the labour of the ancient Egyptians. We entered a court, formed by six columns on each side, to which are attached statues of priests, rudely sculptured. This court is 64 feet in length, and 36 in breadth. The entrance to the

temple has three immense columns on each side, to which are attached statues of priests 18 feet 6 inches high. These are scarcely injured. Each carries a crosier in his hand; and their rich dresses and gigantic proportions give them a most imposing appearance. In each of the side walls of the first chamber are four niches, 6 feet 6 inches square, containing each three figures, a little mutilated. These, as well as the colossal priests, have been painted. This chamber is 46 feet long, 35 wide, and 22 high.

The second chamber is 34 feet 6 inches wide, and 15 feet 6 inches long, with two smaller apartments on each side. At the end of both the large chambers are blocks of stone in the recesses of the walls, which, on being struck, return a hollow sound. They are probably sarcophagi. Beyond the second chamber is the sanctuary, which is 15 feet in length and 11 in breadth. At the further end of this stands an altar, and immediately behind it is a bench 11 feet long, on which four statues are sitting. Bench, statues, chambers, columns, are alike hewn out of the living rock.

About 9 miles from Guerfeh Hassan, on the western side, stand the remains of Dakki. The temple is perfect, and the hieroglyphics, which are in high relief, are in better preservation than any I saw in Ethiopia. Here the desert approaches nearly to the water's edge, and is covered by small elevations which have the appearance of pyramids. At seven miles, and at sixteen, from Dakki, are still ruins of temples. How far do these Egyptian temples penetrate into Ethiopia? At Bardé, the latter of these places, the mountains again approach the Nile, from which they had receded since we quitted Dakki.

Twelve miles above Bardé, on the western side of the river, is the temple of Sibhoi, and we landed to examine it. We found two statues about ten feet high, which seem to have stood on each side of the first entrance. From this ran an avenue of sphynxes, 6 feet in height. Six of these only are left; the rest are buried in the sand. At the second entrance, which opened at the end of the avenue, stood two statues 14 feet high. These have fallen; the one is broken, the head and shoulders of the other are buried in the sand. Beyond this entrance are avenues formed by rows of square columns, to which are attached statues of priests. These are much defaced. The entrance into the temple, and the temple itself, are completely buried in the sand of the desert; and it is probable that every vestige of the building will disappear from the same cause.

At Sibhoi we were about 90 miles from Philoë; and here, after having been detained some days by contrary winds, we quitted our boat, and procured asses and camels to convey us to Dehr, which was about fourteen miles distant, and on the eastern side of the river.

Dehr and Ibrim were formerly two advanced posts of the government of Egypt, where small garrisons of Janizaries were stationed: the former is now the residence of Hassan Cashef, said to be the most powerful chieftain of the country of the Barâbras; and the latter is deserted.

One hour before Dehr, we entered the desert on the western side of the Nile, to visit the ruins of Amada, once a fine temple, then a Christian church, now a village of wretched huts, which are built upon, and around it. The early Christians deemed it a work of piety to cover with stucco the painted figures

of their predecessors the Egyptians; but, where this has fallen off, the colours still appear in a beautiful state of preservation.

We were apprised of our approach to Dehr only by a greater degree of population, and a greater number of mud huts. After passing many of these huts, scattered among date trees, we reached the house of the Cashef, which was distinguished by its being built of brick and raised two stories high.

Hassan was celebrating his marriage, and we sat down under a sort of rude brick piazza till we should be admitted into his presence. Our appearance soon drew together a number of his people, and though many of them were drunk in consequence of the festival, they offered us no incivility. In about an hour a large mess was brought us, consisting of layers of paste, upon which was a piece of boiled goat's flesh swimming in hot butter. We invited the persons near us to partake of it, and they seemed much pleased, and shewed us great hospitality.

After waiting about four hours, the Cashef appeared, attended by five or six of his principal officers, and a number of negro guards. He was about twenty-five years of age, six feet high, handsome, and half intoxicated. He began by asking boisterously what we wanted, and why we had come to Dehr. I replied that we were come to pay our respects to him, and to see the remains of antiquity in his country. "There is nothing curious to see," said Hassan; "but I suppose you are come to visit the tombs of your fathers." The idea of Europeans having once been masters of these countries, which prevails throughout Egypt, and reaches into Nubia, probably arises from the magnificent remains of antiquity, which must have been the work of an en-



lightened people; and the only enlightened people the natives have heard of are the Europeans. I asked permission of the Cashef to go to Ibrim, which he refused, adding, "There is nothing to be seen there, and I have no horses to carry you."

We were not pleased with this behaviour of a chieftain surrounded by 300 armed negroes, and who, as we afterwards learned, had nearly 3000, his own property, purchased by him at Dongola and Sennaar, under his command. He remained a short time in expectation of my offering him a present, and I certainly failed in an essential point of eastern good manners by reserving it till the morrow, when I thought he might be sober. However, he assigned us a lodging, which, though a miserable hut, built of mud and thatched with date branches, was the best in Dehr, next to his own house, as it contained two rooms. A centinel was placed at our door, and a supper was sent us similar to our dinner.

Early in the morning I received a visit from the secretary of Hassan, who told me that his master expected a present, and hinted that one of our swords would be acceptable. At eleven o'clock we waited on the Cashef by his own orders, and found him at the further end of a long apartment, smoaking. He wore linen trowsers, with a burnouse, or long cloak with a hood, thrown over his shoulders, and a turban on his head. The only mark of authority about him was a rude iron truncheon which he held in his hand. Pipes and coffee were presented to us; and then, being unwilling to part with our arms, I offered the Cashef a watch. He took it, examined it, thanked me, and declined accepting it: and he was right, for of what value could such a piece of mechanism be to a Nubian, who could neither comprehend its use, nor regulate its motions.



Being convinced that I should not obtain the means of advancing further without the sacrifice of one of our swords, I immediately took off my own, a fine Damascus blade, worth about 500 piastres, and, approaching the Cashef, asked his permission to throw it over his shoulders. The effect was instantaneous. The Cashef assumed the most friendly manner, and asked me if I had left my harem at the Cataracts, meaning to present me with a female slave as an attendant upon my wife. Upon my answering in the negative, he spoke to his secretary, who retired, and soon returned with a negro boy, about ten years old. Hassan called the boy, spoke some words to him, and gave him his hand to kiss. With evident agitation the boy approached me, kissed my hand, and put it to his forehead. This simple ceremony formed the transfer of the young negro to myself. I now repeated my request to go to Ibrim, which was granted without any hesitation, and the offer made of horses, dromedaries, and any thing else in the Cashef's power.

Early the next morning we set out on our journey. At the distance of half an hour from Dehr, the road led us over the mountains, and in about two hours more we descended into the valley of the Nile, which in five hours conducted us to Ibrim. I should have mentioned that I saw at Dehr a temple cut out of the solid rock, resembling that at Guerfeh, but much inferior.

Ibrim was situated on the eastern side of the river, at the southern extremity of a ridge of mountains, which, for two miles, rise nearly perpendicular from the Nile, scarcely leaving space for the road that lies between them and the river. The town was built on the eastern slope of the mountain, the citadel on

the summit. The walls that inclosed the citadel, and the ruins of the governor's house and some others, may still be traced; but the destruction of Ibrim has been so complete, that no solitary native was wandering among its ruins, no vestige of life was seen around us; not even a date tree could be discovered. The last stand made by the Mamelûks against their enemies, before they retreated into Dongola, was at Ibrim; and the population of the place was partly carried off by them, and has partly removed to Dehr.

It is said that the Mamelûks, to the number of about 500, together with 5,000 negro slaves, whom they have armed, have driven out the independent King of Dongola, and taken possession of his country. The capital, which also bears the same name, is about twelve or fourteen days' journey above the second cataract from Egypt, which is three days' journey above Ibrim. It is reported that the city of Dongola is situated on both sides of the Nile, in a vast plain, and is much larger than any in Upper Egypt. The Mamelûks have built a strong wall to prevent the incursions of the Arabs of the desert, and are said to have laid aside their ancient habits of magnificence, to employ themselves in agriculture, and to be in possession of vast numbers of cattle. It is also said that one of the Beys has been able to cast cannon, and that there are, among the Mamelûks, eight English and ten French deserters.

Having regularly traced the Nile from the sea to Ibrim, a space of from 720 to 730 miles, and not deeming it expedient to meet the Mamelûks on the confines of their newly-established kingdom, I again returned to Cairo.

During the whole of my journey between Assuan

and Ibrim, I found the natives civil and hospitable. They conducted us to the remains of antiquity without suspicion, and supplied us with whatever their scanty means afforded. It is true they viewed us with curiosity, and seemed surprised at our venturing among them. At Kalaptshi they said to our guide, "How dare these people come here? Do they not know that we have 500 muskets in our village, and that Douab Cashef dares not come and levy contributions?" Our guide replied that as we meant to do no harm, we expected to receive none; and with this answer they expressed themselves satisfied.

The persons and characters of the Barâbras are such as I first found them on quitting Philoë. The women seemed to pass immediately from childhood to old age. The hair of the men is sometimes frizzed at the sides, and stiffened with grease, so as to resemble the projection on the head of the sphynx. The dress is in general like that of their neighbours the Egyptians, with the exception of the turban, which is seldom seen among the Barâbras. The style of the temples is the same as in Egypt, and the execution of the hieroglyphics as perfect; but, upon the whole, the walls of those in Ethiopia are not so well wrought, or so nicely put together.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## FEZZAN.

## CAIRO TO MOURZOUK.

AT the village of Kardaffi, near Cairo, I joined the caravan returning from Mecca to the western countries of Africa; intending to accompany it as far as Mûrzoók, the capital of the kingdom of Fezzan. On the following day the kettle drum of our leader roused us before sunrise, and we began our journey. I was delighted to find that I was become a part of one of those large caravans which annually traverse deserts that can scarcely be passed in any other manner; and I feasted upon my good fortune, till I felt the inconvenience of real hunger: I then observed that some of our principal merchants, more provident than myself, were at work upon a dry biscuit and some onions. I travelled as a Mohammedan merchant, with two horses for myself and my servant, and camels for my merchandize.

We halted at noon, and soon after sunset our commander gave the signal for halting for the night; when we pitched our tents, and I ordered my servant to prepare my supper. An old Arab merchant observing me unemployed, said, "Thou art young, and dost not yet assist in getting ready the meal of which thou art to partake. It is not so with us. Thanks to God we are not dependent on others in

this desert, as those poor pilgrims are ; but eat as we provide for ourselves. But, perhaps," added he, sarcastically, " thou art carrying a large sum of money, and thou payest that man well." This lesson was not thrown away. I ever after assisted both myself and others, to the utmost of my abilities, and rose proportionably in the esteem of my fellow travellers.

On the second day we halted to fill our water skins ; when a troop of Bedouins appeared at some distance, and spread terror throughout the caravan. Our Sheik had obtained the veneration and confidence of his followers, not only by his being a Shereeff, but by the prudence and courage he had manifested during their long pilgrimage. He immediately ordered us to occupy the spot affording water, and went with about twenty Arabs to reconnoitre the ground on which the Bedouins had appeared, for they had now retreated. We saw them no more ; but we made no fires at night, for fear of discovering the place of our encampment. The next morning we entered the desert between the mountainous barrier, and the cultivated valley, of Egypt.

The horse of an Arab fell sick, and was unable to keep up with the caravan. Determined to practice the lesson I had received, I assisted in attending him, and at night was complimented with two pieces of camel's flesh, dried, and the thanks of the owner, sent by a slave. I was instantly surrounded by a number of the meaner Arabs, who eyed the delicious present with avidity, and were greatly surprised at my self-denial when I divided it among them.

The Arab sets out on his journey with a provision of flour, and *cuscasoe*, that is, a paste of flour and



water made into small pieces, and, when dressed, put in a vessel full of holes, which is placed over a pot of boiling water and cooked by steam : to these he adds onions, mutton suet, and oil or butter. Some of the richer class are provided with biscuit and dried flesh.

As soon as the caravan halts, the baggage is unladen ; the drivers and slaves dig a hole in the sand wherein to make a fire, and then proceed in search of three stones, to line the cavity and support the cauldron, and of wood to make the fire. The travellers employ the interval between placing the cauldron over the fire, and the boiling of the water, first, in discussing what the mess shall be, and then in preparing it. The ordinary meal is a stiff farinaceous pap, diluted by soup, and enriched by dried and pulverized fish. At other times, the meal is kneaded into a strong dough, which affords a species of hard dumplings. A better repast is made of dried meat, boiled with mutton suet, onions, crumbled biscuits, salt, and a good deal of pepper. The meat is the portion of the master, the broth that of his followers. The food is served in a dish, which, as well as the cauldron, is of copper, and which, from economy of baggage, also serves for the camels to drink out of.

The slaughtering of a camel affords a feast to the camel drivers and slaves. The friends of the owner of the animal have a preference in the purchase ; and after dividing the carcase, every slave comes in for a share, and the bones pass through various hands and mouths before they are thrown away. Sandals are made of the skin, and the hair is woven into twine.

It is not on every occasion that time can be

allowed, or materials found, for dressing victuals. The traveller is prepared for such an exigency by a provision of what is called *simatee*; that is, barley boiled till it has swelled; then dried, first in the sun, and afterwards over a fire; then ground to powder, and mixed with pepper, salt, and carraway seeds. This is carried in a leathern bag; and when it is used, it is either kneaded into a dough with water, and eaten with oil or butter; or it is further diluted, and mixed with dates or onions. Such is the fare of the traveller in the Desert, when fuel cannot be found, or when water cannot be spared for boiling.

Water is carried in skins; those from Soudan are the best and strongest; they are made of an ox's hide, and are worth three pounds sterling each. In these, water will keep good for five days; in the others, which are made of goat skin, it will acquire an ill taste and smell after two. The skins are greased on the inside with butter or oil; the latter gives the water a rancid taste, and renders it fit only for the palate of an Arab.

On the eighth day of our journey we reached the chain of mountains which forms the western barrier of Egypt, and which had hitherto bounded all my prospects in that direction. What must have been the feelings of an ardent young African traveller, when, for the first time, he reached the summit! On the tenth day I attained this point, and saw a plain extending along the ridge, on either hand, further than the eye could reach, and before me, several miles. This plain was a saline mass, on which clods of salt, discoloured with sand, lay close to each other. At about the middle of its breadth was a spring, too salt to be drunk.

On the eleventh day, we came to the first inhabited spot of our journey, the village of Karet am el Sogheir, situated between two projecting branches of the ridge of mountains we had passed; having actually travelled 98 hours, which at the common caravan rate of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles an hour, makes a distance of 245 miles. The desert between the cultivated tract of Egypt and the chain of naked lofty hills which form its western boundary, was from one to six miles in breadth, and abounded in springs, to which we resorted every second or third day for water: at the end of our journey, these were nearly dried up. What remained on the surface was bitter; but on digging to the depth of five or six feet, sweet water was every where found. In this tract of sandy desert, there is much petrified wood, the evidence of its having once been fertile. Is it the will of Providence, or the fault of man, that this desert is no longer a part of Egypt?

The village of Karet am el Sogheir is situated on a vast isolated mass of rock, rising out of a sandy plain, on which are scattered other such masses, of smaller dimensions; a path of very difficult ascent leads to the village. We pitched our camp among date trees at the foot of the rock; and the inhabitants, who do not consist of more than thirty men capable of bearing arms, came down, almost to a man, to welcome and assist us.

Towards the evening, we walked up to the village. The houses are caves either cut, or found, in the rock by the ancient inhabitants. The modern have added, in front of these, low houses, constructed of stones, cemented with calcareous earth, and thatched with the boughs of date trees. In the centre of the village was a market place, where I

saw some of our pilgrims bartering for dates, henna to dye the hands of the women, el cohol to tinge their eye-brows, rings of glass or lead to ornament their persons, and a small quantity of powder and shot. The traffic was carried on with much noise and eagerness; though the merchandize of both parties appeared to me of little value. Dates are the only riches of the inhabitants. With these, they procure from the caravans such articles as I have mentioned; from the Arabs mutton; and from Alexandria, corn, oil, and fat.

Karet am el Sogheir is an independent state, too weak to attack others, and almost poor enough to escape being attacked. Its members, however, do not trust wholly to their poverty for their defence; for, on the Bedouins once attempting to deprive them of their rock, a holy man, who now lies buried in the village, and whose bones, I sincerely hope, possess the power he did while living, so completely dazzled the eyes of the invaders, that they sought in vain for the place. The manners of this small society, separated by tracts of desert from every other, are rude and simple; but the people are hospitable and peaceable.

After some days of repose, we proceeded, first along the skirts of the broad sandy plain; then over a ridge stretching from the mountains we had passed before; and lastly through a green and fertile valley, where men were gathering provender for their cattle. Our train of heavy laden camels denoted that we were not a troop of hostile Arabs; and the people, leaving their employment, ran to meet us, and to congratulate us upon our arrival. They told us all was peace; and, mounting their asses, they conducted us to a plain near the town of Siwah, where



they told us we might encamp in safety, and where we pitched our tents. Siwah is 20 hours, or about 50 miles from Karet am el Sogheir, making the whole of our journey 295 miles.

Siwah is a small independent state, acknowledging the Grand Signior as its lord, but paying him no tribute. Its territory is about six miles in length, and four and a half in breadth. Five villages surround Siwah, the principal town, at the distance of from one to two miles. The chief produce of the territory is dates; though, with little assistance from the cultivators, it yields corn, rice, pomegranites, figs, olives, apricots, and plantanes. It is surrounded on all sides by desert.

The town of Siwah is built upon, and around, a mass of rock. The houses are so close to each other, that many of the streets are dark, even at noon; and they are so intricate, that a stranger cannot find his way into, or out of, the town, small as it is, without a guide. Those houses near the base of the rock are higher than the others; and their walls are so thick and strong that they form a circumvallation of defence to those within. The town is like a beehive, filled with cells, swarming with inhabitants, and buzzing with their sound. Round the foot of the rock, are stables for horses, asses, and camels; as these animals could neither ascend to the town, nor be accommodated in it.

Each inhabitant of the town possesses one, or more gardens, fenced with a wall or hedge, which it is his sole business to cultivate and water. A large garden, teeming with the produce of the country, is valued at from four to six hundred imperial dollars. Baskets of dates are the currency of Siwah. A man who strikes another pays a fine of from ten to fifty



of these ; the baskets are about three feet high, and four in circumference.

It is said that these people are rich, from the extensive traffic they carry on in dates ; we found them obtrusive and thievish ; and thought it necessary to be upon our guard, not only against their pillaging, but against an open attack.

The complexion of the people of Siwah is darker than that of the Egyptians. The men wear the Soudan shirt of white cotton, with large sleeves, with a large piece of blue and white striped cotton, manufactured at Cairo, and called a *melayé*, thrown over the left shoulder ; on their head they wear the Tunisine cap of red cloth. The women wear wide shifts of blue cotton, with the *melayé* thrown over the head, and covering the body like a cloak. They plait the hair in tresses, inserting various ornaments of glass or silver ; and they wear round the neck, arms, and ancles, rings of silver, copper, or glass.

As we approached the spot destined for our encampment, I had descried to the westward, at the distance of a few miles from the road, the ruins of an extensive building : I afterwards visited these ruins three different times ; but I was prevented from examining them so minutely as I wished, by the jealousy of the people who surrounded me.

The materials of this building might suggest the idea that it was one of the first attempts of man after he quitted his primeval habitations, the caves ; and that he took his plan of architecture from his former dwellings, heaping rock on rock, as nature had done before him.

The outward walls face the four cardinal points ; the foundations are in most places visible ; and though most of the walls have been thrown down ;

from the masses remaining, they appear to have been very strong. The interior ground has every where been dug up in search of treasure.

In the centre of this extensive area stands a building about 27 feet in height; from 30 to 36 in length, and 24 in breadth. The walls are 6 feet in thickness; being composed of large free-stones, without and within, and filled up in the middle with small stones and lime. The ceiling is formed by vast blocks of stone, which stretch across from side to side, and cover the whole building; each of these is about four feet in breadth and three in depth. One of these blocks has fallen in, and is broken; and the people of Siwah have not been able to remove from the ground the fragments of the mighty stone that a former generation raised, when whole, high above their heads. The southern end of the building has likewise fallen; but the materials being portable, they have been chiefly carried away.

The entrances to this building are three; the principal one to the north, the others to the east and west. The inside of the walls, beginning at half their height from the ground, is decorated with hieroglyphics, sculptured in relief, but much injured, and in some places wholly defaced. On different parts of the wall appear vestiges of paint, and the colour seems to have been green.

Is this the famous Temple of Jupiter Ammon, whither Alexander repaired to consult the oracle of his pretended father? I wish I were better qualified to determine so interesting a question; but if I might presume to give an opinion, I should say that it was.

There are many catacombs in the vicinity of Siwah, one of which I visited. The place is called

El Mota, the place of burial. It is a rocky hill, about one mile north-east of the town, with a number of caverns on its declivity; but the most remarkable are on the summit. There is a separate entrance to each, from which a gentle descent leads to a door-way; the cavern then expands into a chamber, wrought with great labour and neatness, and on each side are smaller excavations for containing the bodies. I sought in vain for the intire head of an ancient Ammonite; I found only pieces of the skull, and fragments of linen cloth adhering to some ribs. The ground in all these catacombs has been dug in search of treasure; and I was told that in every one of these sepulchres gold had been, and is yet sometimes, found.

We remained eight days at Siwah, when we broke up our encampment and proceeded on our journey. The fourth day brought us into the fruitful valley of Schiaca. On the sixth day, after halting to collect water, we travelled throughout the night, sixteen hours; the following day and night we travelled eighteen hours; these forced marches being over a level desert, sprinkled with sand hills. The eighth day, having travelled fourteen hours, we discovered that, during the night, we had wandered from the caravan; we therefore resolved to await the return of day. We unloaded our camels, placing each load by the side of the camel which carried it, that it might soon be replaced in case of emergency; and I lay down on the sand, with my horse's bridle in one hand, and my firelock in the other, and slept soundly till sun-rise. We then discovered our caravan, and saw before us, at the distance of half a mile, a fruitful spot, abounding with water. We hastened to the place, and encamped; both men and beasts

so exhausted with fatigue, that as soon as the baggage was unladen, nothing was thought of but sleep. We reposed here the whole of the next day. On the following day we set out for Augila, from which we were distant not more than nine hours, or about twenty-seven miles: we proceeded by short marches, for we were now among friends, and some of us near home.

There are three towns in the territory of Augila; the town properly so called, Mojabra, and Meledila. The two latter are near each other, Mojabra being on the south, and Meledila on the north of our road, at rather more than half of the way to Augila.

Our entry into Mojabra was solemn and affecting, as the greater number of the merchants of our caravan had here habitations and families. The Bey of Bengasi, Vicegerent for the Bashaw of Tripoli, was at this time residing at Augila, and sent about twenty of his Arabs to take an account, in writing, of the burden of the camels, and to demand a small duty. This being done, the Arabs formed the right wing of our caravan, the merchants who had horses formed the left, and the pilgrims and ordinary Arabs composed the centre, headed by the Sheik, preceded by the green flag. The pilgrims marched on, singing, the Arabs made their horses prance and curvet, and, as we drew near the town, a number of old men and children came out to meet and embrace their sons and fathers.

The inhabitants of Mojabra pass their lives in travelling between Cairo and Fezzan. Boys of thirteen and fourteen years of age accompanied us from Augila to Fezzan, on foot, or at least very seldom mounting a horse. The merchants engaged in the caravan trade have generally three houses, one at



Kardaffi, near Cairo, one at Mojabra, and one at Zuila, or Mourzouk. Many have a wife and family establishment at each of these houses ; while others, more economical, only take a wife for the time they stay.

The town of Augila is about a mile in circumference ; the streets are narrow and dirty ; the houses consist only of the ground floor, each room opens to an internal area, and has no other light than what is admitted by the door-way.

The country round Augila is level, and the soil sandy, but tolerably fertile. The inhabitants do not grow corn sufficient for their own consumption ; both corn and sheep being brought annually by a caravan from Bengasi, on the Mediterranean, which is distant thirteen days' journey, or about 234 miles.

We left Augila with our caravan augmented by companies of merchants from Bengasi, Merote, and Mojabra ; and we were attended some distance by many of the inhabitants of the town, as a mark of respect. To do us honour, they pranced their horses and fired their muskets round us. At night, we encamped in an open desert, without water, or even a single blade of grass for the camels.

On the second day of our journey from Augila, we travelled over a plain of limestone and sand ; on the third, detached mounds rose in the plain, which were formed by sands, arrested in their progress by pieces of rock. From this district commences a range of mountains.

On the fourth day of our journey, a gentle ascent led us to the summit of the mountains, and a path, just wide enough for a single camel, conducted us down a frightful precipice, into the valley below. We marched along this valley, which was skirted on



both sides by such rocks as that we had passed, till it expanded into a wider plain, where we encamped, and found abundance of water. Here we replenished our bags for the ensuing days.

On the fifth and sixth days, the country was barren, though abounding in springs. The Arabs make no use of this water. The seventh day we travelled between two ranges of hills, and in the evening we came to a spot affording not only verdure, but trees. On the eighth day we travelled through a grove, and, in the evening, opened upon a desert of hills and rocks. From one of these I first saw the mountainous region called Harutsch, which we were to cross. Range upon range of black and dreary mountains, succeeded each other, and formed the only prospect.

On the ninth day we travelled among the hills, through narrow and dismal ravines, which opened at intervals to fresh and even luxuriant herbage; and we passed the night at some pools of water on the edge of a valley about six miles in circumference, with a rich verdure, shrubs, and trees. The tenth, eleventh, and twelfth days, we were almost incessantly marching through this dreary solitude; but could not expedite our journey as we wished, from the windings of the path, and the tardiness of the movement over layers of loose stones, which lasted for half a mile together.

On the thirteenth day, in the afternoon, we broke from this dark region into an extensive plain, and continued our march along it for some hours; when we arrived at the foot of some low mountains, and encamped at the entrance of a defile which leads through them.

On the fourteenth morning, I placed myself among

the foremost of the caravan, with some poor pilgrims who were hastening to the spring which we were that day to arrive at. On reaching the well, we found it already cleaned, and in order, and several Tuat Arabs were lying round it. I prepared for breakfast, and offered some meat and a handful of dates to an Arab pilgrim of our caravan, who was sixty years of age. He thankfully accepted them, assuring me that this was his third pilgrimage from Fezzan to Mecca, without any other means of subsisting by the way than the charity of his fellow travellers. He had now been three days without his necessary portion of water. We reposed at this well the rest of the day, and our leader dispatched a messenger to Mourzouk, to give notice of the arrival of the caravan on the frontier of the kingdom of Fezzan, and to bear a letter of respect to the Sultan from each merchant individually.

On the fifteenth day of our journey from Angila we came again to the society of men; a march of nine hours bringing us to Temissa, in the territory of Fezzan. When we were within an hour's march of the town, the inhabitants came out to welcome us, and congratulate us upon our safe arrival, repeating incessantly, "How dost thou fare?" "How dost thou do?" "How art thou thyself?" "Praised be God that thou art arrived in peace!" "God grant thee peace!" &c.

On our approach to Temissa, the pilgrims arranged themselves with their kettle drum and green flag; the merchants formed a troop at the head of the caravan; and we proceeded to a grove of date trees, the place of our encampment, whilst the women assembled without the walls, and welcomed us with reiterated joyful exclamations, which we answered by a discharge of our fire-arms.

The day was spent in felicitations on our arrival; as great fears had been entertained for our safety. The Bedouins had of late been so daring as to rob in the vicinity of Cairo; and, not far from our road, between Augila and the frontiers of Fezzan, we descried some hundreds of dead camels, and other beasts of burthen, which they had plundered and left. They had robbed in the neighbourhood of Temissa, and had even made an attack upon the town; waiting for us in this part of the country, till they concluded that we should not come this year.

Temissa is built upon a hill, and surrounded with a high wall; but it does not contain more than forty men capable of bearing arms. Ruins of houses remain, which shew that the former inhabitants were better lodged than the present, who have patched up dwelling places among the ruins, scarcely so comfortable as the sheds for cattle in England. On my return from visiting the town, I found a number of the inhabitants in our camp, bartering sheep, fowls, and dates, for tobacco, butter, female ornaments, and the coarse woollen stuff with which the Arabs here are generally clothed.

On the sixteenth day, we moved slowly on, between date trees over level ground, with hillocks of sand formed by the wind against some of the trees. At two o'clock, we came within sight of Zuila, which being a place of importance in the territory of Fezzan, we halted at a little distance from the town, and prepared for a ceremonious arrival. The merchants and their slaves were dressed in their best apparel, and the green flag was borne before the Sheik, when we perceived twenty men, mounted on white horses, with a green flag in the centre, ad-

vance to meet us. These were found to be the Shereeff Hendy, the principal man of the town, with his eight sons, and other members of his family. They joined our caravan, with shouts and discharge of muskets, and accompanied us to the place of our encampment near the town. Our day's journey from Temissa to Zuila had taken up nine hours.

Many of the inhabitants of Zuila came to visit us, either from curiosity, or to barter their goods: all behaved with the greatest decorum and regularity; but the family of the Shereeff was distinguished by particular politeness of manners. They wore the Tripolitan dress, but over it a fine Soudan shirt.

Some centuries past, Zuila was the residence of the Sultans of Fezzan; and it appears to have been of thrice the extent it is now. At present it occupies a space of about a mile in circuit; but in, and near the town, are the ruins of considerable buildings.

The environs of Zuila are level, fertile, and well supplied with water; the groves of date trees are very extensive; and the people pay greater attention to agriculture than those of the adjacent places.

In the evening, a slave of the Shereeff's brought to each tent a dish of meat and broth, and ten small loaves; and soon after, we were each of us presented with three small loaves for the breakfast of the next morning. This is an ancient piece of Arab hospitality, which is still practised on the arrival of every caravan.

On the seventeenth day, we left Zuila, and having passed through a grove of date trees, we came to an extensive and open plain, over which we travelled seven hours. We passed the night at a small village called Hemara. The people were



few and wretched, though the country around was most fertile.

On the eighteenth day, we crossed a plain of date trees, among which I discovered several villages. My companions were in high spirits on their near approach to Mourzouk; but these were a little lowered by the arrival of an officer from the Sultan, to take an account of the merchandize. This ceremony had not usually been performed till the arrival of a caravan at the gates of Mourzouk, and, by that time, the merchants having disposed of one third of their goods, had evaded such a proportion of the duties. Some of them, however, had contrived to intermingle a part of their baggage with that of the pilgrims, which pays no duties.

At Tragen, the place of our encampment, we passed the whole of the nineteenth day, employed in preparing for our honourable appearance before the Sultan, who usually rides out to meet the caravan, out of pious respect to the pilgrims returning from Mecca. The Sultan sent off some camels laden with meat and bread, which were here distributed among us. On the twentieth day from Augila, we travelled eight hours, and arrived at the village of Seedy Bischir; and on the twenty-first, after a march of three hours, we finished our long and perilous journey, and arrived in the immediate vicinity of Mourzouk. We had traversed a distance of upwards of a thousand miles in seventy-five days; forty-three of which were spent in actual travelling, and thirty-two in repose. According to my computation we had travelled 401 hours, that is,

to Siwah . . . . .	118
to Augila. . . . .	$87\frac{1}{2}$
to Mourzouk . . . . .	$195\frac{1}{2}$



which, at the general rate of two miles and a half an hour, would make the whole distance 1002 miles. The distance between Cairo and Mourzouk, in a straight line, is said to be 770 miles,

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## CHAPTER XV.

### MOURZOUK, AND RETURN TO EGYPT.

ON our arrival near Mourzouk, we saw the Sultan of Fezzan, posted on a rising ground, attended by a numerous court, and a multitude of his subjects. Our caravan halted; and every person of any importance dismounted and approached the sovereign. We found him seated on an elbow chair, which was covered with a cloth striped red and green, and placed at the extremity of an oval area. The Sultan wore the Tripolitan vest, and over it a shirt, embroidered with silver in the Soudan manner. Close to him, on each side, stood white Mamelûks and Negro slaves, with drawn sabres; behind these were six banners, and black and half-naked slaves holding lances and halberds; and the area was surrounded by soldiers of rather a mean appearance.

We entered the circle by an opening opposite to the Sultan, and according to the ceremonial of his court, we pulled off our slippers, and advanced to kiss his imperial hand. As each merchant had paid his compliment, they passed off alternately to the right and the left, behind the Sultan; and we

arranged ourselves in groupes on either side of the throne. The Sheik, our leader, then entered, with his sabre drawn, and his kettle drum and green flag borne before him, and was followed by the pilgrims chaunting praises to God for having thus far conducted them in safety: nor did they cease, till the Sultan dismissed their leader, with a gracious promise to send his accustomed present of bread and meat to every tent.

The ceremony of audience being over, the Sultan remounted his horse, and rode back into the city of Mourzouk, preceded by his kettle drums and banners, and surrounded by his lance-bearers and halberdiers; while his courtiers joined the Arabs of the caravan, and made their horses curvet and prance on each side of the procession, till we reached the place of our encampment.

The greatest length of the cultivated part of Fezzan is about 300 English miles, and runs from north to south; and its greatest breadth, from east to west is about 200; but, besides this tract, the mountainous region of Harutsch on the east, and deserts on the south and west, are reckoned within its territory. It contains 101 towns and villages, of which Mourzouk is the capital. The next in consideration are Sockna, Sibha, Hun, and Wadan, to the north; Gatron to the south; Yerma to the west; and Zuila to the east.

The climate of Fezzan is at no season temperate, or agreeable. During the summer the heat is intense. The south wind is scarcely supportable by the natives, and the north wind drove not only them, but myself, to the fire. Tempests of wind, both from the north and south are frequent; whirling up the sand and dust, so as to make the very

atmosphere appear yellow. It rains but seldom, and then but little in quantity. There is no river, nor, indeed, rivulet, deserving of notice, in the whole country.

Dates are the principal produce of Fezzan. Wheat and barley are cultivated; but ignorance, indolence, and oppression prevent a sufficient quantity being raised for the consumption of the inhabitants; and they rely upon the Arab countries on the north for a great part of their subsistence.

Horned cattle are only found in the most fruitful districts, and even there, are few in number. They are employed in drawing water from the wells, and are never slaughtered, except in cases of extreme necessity. Sheep are bred in the southern parts; but the greater number are supplied by the bordering Arabs; with the meat, the very skin is roasted and eaten. The ordinary domestic animal is the goat. Horses are few; camels are excessively dear, and are kept only by the chief people and richer merchants; asses are the general beasts of burthen, whether for draught or carriage. All these animals are fed with dates.

The commerce of Fezzan is considerable. From October to February, Mourzouk is the rendezvous of caravans from Egypt, Bengasi, Tripoli, Gadamés, Tuat, and Soudan. Those from the south and west bring slaves, ostrich feathers, leopard skins, and gold, both in dust and native grains. Bornou sends copper; Cairo, silks, striped cottons, woollen cloths, glass, beads, imitations of coral, and an assortment of India goods. Bengasi sends tobacco, snuff, and the manufactures of Turkey. This caravan usually joins that from Cairo at Augila. Tripoli sends paper, fire-arms, sabres, knives, cloths,

and red caps. The Tuat Arabs bring butter, oil, fat, and corn; and those more to the south-east, senna, ostrich feathers, and camels. Thus Fezzan, without any articles of commerce within itself, is the grand central mart for the commodities around.

The Sultan of Fezzan is a Shereeff, or descendant of Mohammed. Tradition says that one of his ancestors, coming from western Africa, conquered this country about five hundred years ago. The Sultan pays a tribute of 4,000 dollars, annually, to the Bashaw of Tripoli. The followers of Mohammed have dispossessed the black natives of Africa, as those of Jesus Christ have done the copper-coloured people of America; but there is this remarkable difference in the two religions, though they have produced the same effect; Mohammed propagated his by the sword; while Christ inculcated peace, brotherly kindness, and forgiveness of injuries; and even forbade his disciples to repel aggression.

The house of the Sultan of Fezzan is situated within the walls of the fortress of Mourzouk, and has no other inmates than himself and the eunuchs who attend him. His harem is contiguous; but he never enters it; the ladies waiting upon him at his order. They consist of a Sultana, and about forty slaves, the latter of whom, if they have no children, are dismissed, and replaced, according to his fancy.

The door of audience is set open three times a day, which is announced by the sound of the kettle drums. Those persons whom business or respect bring to the Sultan, are conducted through a long narrow passage, between slaves, who incessantly repeat "May God prolong the life of the Sultan!" On coming to the door, the Sultan appears opposite, seated on an elbow chair, raised some steps from the



ground. The person introduced approaches, kisses the hand of the Sultan, and raises it so as to touch his forehead; he then quits it, and kneels before him. He is permitted to state his case in ordinary and plain language, repeating at intervals such expressions as, "God prolong thy life!" "God protect thy country!" &c. It is also the custom to offer a small present.

The Sultan never quits his fortress, except on Fridays, when he goes on horseback to the great mosque, and on days of public solemnity, when he rides on a plain without the city, while his courtiers exhibit their skill in horsemanship, and fire their muskets around him.

The apparel of the Sultan is the same as the ordinary dress of the Tripolitans; but on days of ceremony, he wears over it a large white frock or shirt, made in the Soudan manner, of stuff brocaded with silver and gold, or of satin interwoven with silver. But the most remarkable part of his dress is his turban, which, from the fore to the back part, extends a full yard, and is not less than two feet in breadth.

The office of Cadi, or chief judge, is hereditary in a certain family; and the Sultan selects from this family the person best qualified for this important office, that is, he who can best read and write.

The population of Fezzan may be loosely estimated at about 70, or 75,000 souls. The indigenous race of people are of ordinary stature, not muscular nor strong. Their colour is a deep brown; their hair black and short; their features are regular, and their nose is less flattened than that of a negro.

The mien, the walk, every motion, of the people of Fezzan, denotes a want of energy. Their food consists of dates, and farinaceous pap, generally



without even oil or fat; and this scanty fare, together with the oppression of the government, contributes to weakness of body and dejection of mind. I never knew a more abstemious people than those of Fezzan; though this seems to be the result of necessity. Meat they can never abstain from, if it be set before them; but meat is seldom an article of their food. To denote a rich man at Mourzouk, the common expression is, "He eats bread and meat every day!"

Throughout Mourzouk, I could not find a skilful artificer of any sort. The only tradesmen are shoemakers and smiths; the latter work every metal without distinction; and the same man who makes shoes for the Sultan's horse, makes rings for the Sultan's wife. The women of Fezzan weave coarse woollen cloths called *abbes*; but the shuttle is unknown to them, and they insert the woof, thread by thread, into the warp, with their fingers.

The dress of the common people of Fezzan consists of a shirt of coarse linen or cotton cloth, with the *abbe* thrown over the shoulder; those of the middling class wear frocks of dyed blue cloth, made in Soudan; the richer people, and the Mamelûks of the Sultan, wear the same frock, but of variegated pattern and colours, over the dress of Tripoli; and the *abbe* is worn over all.

The wife of a wealthy man of Fezzan divides her long hair into seven tresses, one of these is braided with strips of gilt leather, which terminate in a bow, the others are bound round with gilt leather, and finish with small pieces of amber, or silver bells. In addition to these ornaments, she fastens to the top of her head silken cords, which hang down, on each side, to her shoulder, and on these are strung a

number of silver rings. Her ears are pierced in two places, in each of which is fixed a thick silver ring. Her necklace is a silk riband, with ten or twelve pieces of agate, and a round silver plate in front. In ordinary dress, ladies of rank wear nine or ten rings of horn or glass upon each arm; on great occasions, these are taken off, and one silver ring, four inches in breadth, is worn in their place; strong rings of brass or silver are also worn above the ankle bone. Women who cannot afford to be fine, wear only a string of glass beads round the neck, and wrap the ends of their tresses round a piece of paste, made of lavender, carraway seeds, cloves, pepper, mastick, and laurel leaves, mixed up with oil.

Women dance publicly in the open places of the city of Mourzouk, to the astonishment of the Mohammedan traveller. The men are much addicted to drunkenness. Their beverage is the fresh juice of the date tree which is called *lugibi*, or a liquor called *bouza*, prepared from the date itself, which is very intoxicating. When friends assemble in the evening, the general amusement is drinking only; but sometimes a *kadanka*, or singing girl, is sent for.

There are more women of a certain description in Mourzouk than in any other capital of the same extent and population; and the general character of improvidence, and consequent distress, is as applicable to these as to any others of their profession.

The inhabitants of Fezzan have no other remedies for diseases than amulets, consisting of sentences taken from the Koran, which the patient wears about his neck, and, in dangerous cases, is made to swallow. As to surgery, I heard that there were at Mourzouk persons who had sufficient skill to cure a simple fracture.

The houses of the people of Fezzan are miserably built. They are constructed with stones, or bricks dried in the sun. No other tools are used in building than the hands of the labourer. When the walls are completely raised, the friends of the proprietor assemble, and assist him to incrust them with a mortar made with white calcareous earth; this work is also done by the hand. The houses are all extremely low, and the light enters only by the door.

Having satisfied my curiosity with regard to Fezzan, and finding that it was impracticable at present to penetrate any further, I joined the caravan, which now consisted only of merchants on horseback, well armed, with their attendants, on its return to Cairo. My camels were now laden with gold and ostrich feathers, instead of woollens, silks, and cottons. What I should visit next was become the question; and as I never delayed the consideration of such a question till the time when I ought to act, I decided it while passing over uniform and uninteresting deserts, upon my horse. I was always a lover of method. Indeed, I humbly conceive that so extensive a plan as the Tour of Africa could not have been accomplished without it; I therefore determined, as being the countries next in order, to visit Dar Fûr, Sennaar, and Abyssinia.

I disposed of my camels and their burden to one of the merchants of our caravan, who gave me bills of exchange, payable at Alexandria, and who, though a Mohammedan, made an honest bargain. This gentleman informed me that the caravans of Fârian merchants set out on their return home from Siout, and that I should probably be able to join one of them, even if I went round by Alexandria.

On the arrival of the caravan at Siwah, I hired

three Bedouins to conduct me to Alexandria, myself and my servant still riding on horseback, and a number of Arabs joining us, who were taking dates to market at that city. We travelled five days in a north-east direction. On the second of these we arrived at Karet am el Soghier, from which village I entered upon a road I had not seen before. On the fifth day we reached a well near the coast of the Mediterranean sea, where we found a plentiful supply of water. The time employed in actual travelling from Siwah to this well, was 62 hours and a quarter, or twelve hours and a half each day.

From the Well to Alexandria, we were never long out of sight of the coast. The country was in general smooth and sandy, but the eye was frequently relieved by spots of verdure, though they consisted only of different kinds of grass-wort, which afford sustenance to the camel; for our horses, we carried a supply of barley and cut straw. In the neighbourhood of Alexandria the ground became rocky. We passed several small encampments of Bedouins, who were in friendship with our conductor, and who received us with great hospitality, and regaled us with milk, dates, and bread newly baked. We arrived at Alexandria from the Well in ten days: the time passed in actual travelling was 75 hours and a half, or about seven hours and a half a day. This is the way by which Alexander marched to the temple of Jupiter Ammon.

Having received the money for my merchandize, and provided myself with all things necessary for the journey I was about undertake, I went to Rosetta, where I embarked upon the Nile, and proceeded up the river to Siout.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## JOURNEY TO DAR FUR, AND RESIDENCE THERE.

**BEYOND** the western wall of Egypt is a vast sandy desert, inhabited by the Muggrebins, or Western Arabs. These people lead a wandering life, and extend to Fezzan and Tripoli; they carry fire-arms, and are good marksmen. In this desert are several fertile spots, like islands in an ocean of sand and rock, three of which were known to the ancients, and were called by them Oases: these, beginning at the north, are the Oasis of Ammon, the Lesser Oasis, and the Larger Oasis. In Arabic they are known by the general appellation of Wah, and are distinguished from each other by the additional appellations of Si Wah, on the north; El Wah el Ghurbi, in the middle; and simply El Wah, The Wah, on the south. The Arabs have a capital settlement in El Wah el Ghurbi. No European that I know of has visited this Wah, but it is said to be much smaller than that to the southward, and that they are separated only by two days' journey of desert from north to south.

At Siout I purchased five camels at about 13*l.* sterling each, to carry my baggage, and I joined the *Cafilet es Soudan*, or caravan of merchants, returning to Dar Fûr. A large caravan from Dar Fûr to Egypt, consists of 2,000 camels, and 1,000 slaves; on the return of the merchants, the number of camels is often not more than 200. Our company



consisted of nearly 500 camels. Of Egyptians, trading for themselves, there were about fifty, of whom five or six were Copts, whose admittance into Dar Fûr the monarch of that country has since forbidden; the remainder, amounting to from 150 to 200 persons, together with the Kabir or leader, were subjects of Dar Fûr.

Desirous of obtaining particular respect in the country I was going to visit, I no longer appeared in the character of a merchant, but announced myself as what I really was, an independent English gentleman. It was the hottest season of the year, and consequently unfavourable for travelling; the merchants, however, considered the variations of climate as not worth a thought, and habit had so inured them to heat that it was no motive for the remission of labour.

On the 25th of May we left Siout, and encamped on the mountain above the town; and on the 28th, we set out on our journey, proceeding by short stages towards El Wah. The merchants pay a tribute of about three shillings, or three shillings and four pence, for each camel, to the Western Arabs, for permission to pass through their country. I refused to pay this tribute, alleging that I was not a merchant, but a stranger employed on business to the Sultan of Dar Fûr. The Arabs murmured, but relinquished their claim; and I have since thought that I should have acted more discreetly if I had not resisted it.

The camels were heavily laden; the merchants travelled slowly, and in detached parties, as it suited their own convenience; and it was not till the 31st that we came to the descent of the rocky mountain which separates Egypt from the desert. From the

summit we had an unbounded view of rocks and sand; the spring at which we were to repose distinguished by marks of vegetation, and low date-trees. The descent was rugged and difficult, though the road, in many places, had been formed by art. We were an hour in reaching the bottom.

On the 1st of June we were four hours and a half in marching to Ainé Dizé, the northern extremity of El Wah. Here the thermometer was at 116, under the shade of the tent. In eight hours more we arrived at Charjé. The leader of the caravan gave notice of our approach to the town by the beating of two kettle drums, which were carried before him as the ensigns of his office, and by shouting and firing of muskets.

Having rested five days at Charjé, we proceeded southwards, over a barren desert, on the skirts of El Wah, to a village called Bulak. The houses are only small square pieces of ground, inclosed by a wall of clay or unburnt bricks, and are generally without a roof; but the place furnishes good water, and the people have dates to sell. We remained here one day, and still marching through desert, though near to fertile lands, we arrived at Beiris, and afterwards at Maghess, the last and southernmost village of El Wah. From our first reaching this fertile spot at Ainé Dizé, to our quitting it at Maghess, our time of actual travelling had been thirty hours.

On the 20th of June, after travelling seven days over barren desert, we arrived at Sheb, where water is found by digging to the depth of a few feet in the sand, and in three days more at Selimé, a small verdant spot, at the foot of a ridge of rocks, where there is good water. So many of the camels had

died in passing the desert, partly from want of water, and partly from being overloaded, that several merchants of the caravan were obliged to bury their goods in the sand near Selimé, and to send for them afterwards from thence.

We rested at Selimé on the 24th, and on the 25th we pursued our way through the desert, which in five days brought us to Leghea, where we found water which was both bad and scarce. In such places on our journey as afforded stones, the people of the caravan collected four or five large ones, and placed them in a heap, at proper distances, to mark the route for their return. When deep and loose sands rendered this impracticable, they relied upon the facility acquired by habit, with which they distinguish the outline and appearance of distant rocks. But, with these aids, the whole caravan was, three times during our journey, at a loss with regard to the road, though several persons among them had traversed this desert ten or twelve times. At Leghea our leader was so unable to determine which was the right course, that he sent forward one of the party to discover some known object which might guide us, and the man was thirty-six hours before he returned. While we remained here, a suffocating wind blew from the south, and raised the sand in clouds. A wooden bowl, capable of holding two gallons, was filled in thirty minutes.

On the 2d of July we left Leghea, and after a severe and fatiguing march of seven days, we arrived at Bir el Malha, or the Salt Spring. On the journey, a man, travelling on foot with the caravan, but unconnected with any person in it, asked me for bread. "How long have you been without bread?" said I. "Two days," was the reply. "And how long without

water?" "I drank water last night." This was at sun-set, after we had been marching all day in extreme heat, and we had yet six hours march to the well.

The water at Bir el Malha is, as its name imports, bad. A troop of the natives of Zeghawa, a place in the northern part of Dar Fûr, met us here. When a caravan is expected, it is their custom to bring a supply of provisions and necessaries to this place, which is only ten days' journey from their home; these they sell at an exorbitant rate, according to the wants of the travellers.

We remained at Bir el Malha till the 12th, and travelled with little interruption till the 20th, when we encamped at a spot called Medwa, where, however, we were obliged to purchase water of some Arabs whom we met. On the 23d we came to the first springs within the limits of Dar Fûr, which are called Wadi Masrûk, having been 57 days on our journey, from the mountain above Siout, 44 of which were passed in actual travelling, and 13 in repose.

We found the termites, or white ants, very vexatious at Wadi Masrûk, building their covered way to every thing within our tents, and destroying all within their reach. These, together with the rains, which had begun to fall towards the end of our journey, and were now pouring like a torrent through the valley, compelled us to abandon the tents, and take shelter in the next village, which was called Sweini. Here I obtained an apartment in the house of a merchant. The house consisted of a multitude of distinct rooms, built with clay, and covered with a slanting roof, but not closed by doors; and the hospitality of the owner allowed all those who could find a place in it to take up their lodging there.



At Sweini generally resides a Melek or governor, who collects the duties on the merchandize of the caravans, for the Sultan of Dar Fûr. Announcing myself as the Sultan's stranger, I pleaded an exemption from the duties, and desired to be introduced to the Sultan. Both the exemption and the demand were new; and it appeared that the monarch of this country did not prefer strangers to duties; for no means of advancing were afforded me till the merchants of the caravan received the same permission. I had letters for different merchants in this district: but no one could receive me till it was known in what light I was considered by the Sultan. At length a letter arrived, impressed with his majesty's seal, with leave for me to proceed to Cobbé, where I was to remain till orders should be given for my admission into his presence, and ordering that no officer should presume to detain me, or to take any thing from me by the way.

Cobbé is more than two days vigilant travelling south of Sweini. It is situated in a plain which extends twenty-two miles towards the west, and ends at the foot of two rocky mountains; to the east there is no extent of level ground. The town runs from north to south, and is two miles in length, but very narrow. The houses are not contiguous; but are divided by considerable pieces of vacant ground, and each is situated within its own inclosure, which contains a large portion. The town is full of trees. During the rainy season, the ground on which it stands is surrounded by a torrent; in the dry season, it is supplied by wells dug within the inclosures of many of the houses; but the inhabitants are sometimes straitened for water, before the return of the periodical rains. There are some villages at small



distances, and in various directions from Cobbé; and I heard of seven other towns at the distance of from five hours to three days' journey. At Cobbé and in other places, a market is held twice a week for meat and provisions. At that of Cobbé are generally slaughtered from ten to fifteen oxen, and from forty to sixty sheep; but it must be observed that all the villages around are supplied from thence. It is usual for the people of the town to lay in their stock of grain about December, when it is the cheapest; and at that time, two, and sometimes three, pecks of millet may be bought for a string of beads worth one penny at Cairo.

There are in the town four or five schools, where boys are taught to read, and, if their parents wish it, to write. The children of the indigent are instructed gratuitously; but those persons who can afford it give the Fukkara, or Teachers, a small reward. There was only one mosque, a small square room, built of clay; but one more spacious was being erected: the material was the same; the area inclosed, however, was 64 feet square, and the walls were to be three feet thick.

The inhabitants of Cobbé are chiefly foreigners and merchants, who trade to Egypt. Some are natives of that country; but the greater number are from the borders of the Nile, from Dongola to Sennaar. These people commonly use among themselves the language of Barabra, though they also speak Arabic. They intermarry with each other, seldom taking a woman of Dar Fûr to wife. Their complexion is not so black as that of the natives of Dar Fûr; they are a good-sized and well-formed people, with short, curled, black hair, not wool, and have often an agreeable and expressive countenance.

The departure of a caravan from Dar Fûr forms there an important event, and even a chronological epocha; changes in the government, and caprices of the despot, occasioning great irregularity in their time of setting out.

The merchants of Cobbé take great care of their camels, which seldom carry above five hundred weight, and more frequently three hundred, or three hundred and a half. They often return upon Egyptian asses, which sell at an advanced price in Soudan. Few merchants use coffee or tobacco on the journey; but are contented with a leathern bag of flour, another of bread baked hard, a leathern vessel of honey or treacle, and another of butter. An article much in use for the slaves is millet coarsely ground, which, after it has undergone a slight fermentation, is made into a paste. When eaten, it is mixed with water, and is called *ginseia*. It is a slight narcotic, and it is said to be by its acidity, a preventative of thirst.

Experienced travellers, for every ten camels laden with merchandize, load one with beans and chopped straw, which, sparingly given, serves them for sustenance during the greater part of the journey from Egypt to Dar Fûr. From Dar Fûr to Egypt, they employ the millet and the coarse hay of the country for the same purpose.

The water, on leaving Egypt, is commonly conveyed in goat skins; but no skill can entirely prevent its evaporation. From Soudan, the merchants use ox-hides, formed into capacious sacks, which are sold to great advantage throughout Egypt. A pair of these is a camel's load. Six of the smaller skins, or two of the larger, are reckoned to contain water sufficient for four persons during four days.

I found the people of Cobbé ill disposed to form any acquaintance with me; my complexion excited their contempt; my being a Frank their detestation; and my being a Christian filled them with religious horror. In this unpleasant situation, I again pressed to be allowed to visit the residence of the Sultan; and having obtained permission, I set out for the court, where I arrived the next day.

I was introduced to the Melek Misellim, one of the principal ministers, whom I found, with some other of the royal attendants, seated on a mat spread upon the sand, under an awning of cotton cloth. The Melek received me with what I thought a rude stare; though I might have considered that I was a kind of object unseen by him before: this was succeeded by a smile of contempt, and a look of aversion. After the common salutations he and his company entered into conversation, partly in their vernacular idiom, and partly in Arabic, on the purpose of my visit to the country; and each made his remarks on my person, and offered his conjectures respecting my character and intentions. Had I appeared before these people as a merchant, my character and intentions had remained unquestioned, my complexion might have been less noticed, and my bales of silks and velvets might have opened for me a ready passage to the Sultan.

A wooden bowl of polenta was placed before my hosts. I took it into my head that they were not much inclined to ask me to partake of it, and yet rather at a loss how to avoid making me the compliment. My pride was roused; and, to extricate them at once from the difficulty, I declined eating, of my own accord, and desired them to begin. It is not my intention to gloss over any mistakes I may

have made in my travels; and I therefore acknowledge that in this instance also I acted wrong. In all countries, to partake of the same food is a bond of fellowship; among Arabs, as I have observed before, it is a sacred bond, never broken; and to avoid it here was to place another barrier between these people and myself.

When they had done eating, they asked me a number of questions concerning Europe, which, not allowing for the ignorance of men so situated, on such a subject, I thought foolish: however, I answered them as well as I was able. When I observed that they grew weary of asking questions, I explained to them in the following speech, why I came there, and what favour I expected should be shewn me.

“ Melek,” said I, “ having come from a far distant country to Misr, [Kahira] I was there informed of the magnificence and hospitality of your king, Abd el Rachman, whose dominion be eternal. Having been accustomed to wander over various countries as a man of rank and leisure, to learn wisdom from the aged, and to communicate precepts beneficial to man, I became desirous to visit Dar Fûr. I was told that my person and my property would be secure, and that permission would be given me to go wherever I might think proper; but my property has been plundered, and my person treated with indignity. I ask redress; and I further ask leave to go to Sennaar, and that three or four people deserving of confidence may be appointed to attend and protect me to the frontiers of Kordofân. I have a small present to offer to the Sultan, which I hope he will accept; and I also hope that he will grant me the favour I request.”



I ought to have acquainted my reader, that the robbery of which I complained was committed by one of my own servants, whom I hired at Cairo; this man having stolen a quantity of coral, while I remained at Cobbé, out of one of my boxes, which had been broken in its carriage to that place.

My eloquent harangue was answered methodically by the Melek. "Merchant," said he, for notwithstanding all the dignity I assumed, nothing better than a merchant could he think me, "you are welcome to the Dar," that is, the house. "The Sultan is kind to strangers, and whatever favour you wish, you have only to ask it: he has ordered a sack of wheat and four sheep to be sent you. At this time it is not possible to pass through Kordofân; the Sultan has a great army there; and when he has subdued the country you may pass unmolested. When you are admitted to his presence, you will tell him who has robbed you, and what you have lost, and he will cause it to be restored to you." I then retired.

I remained three or four days in the tent assigned me, without hearing from the Melek, Misellim; when I sent him word that it was my wish to be introduced to the Sultan, and then to be dismissed as soon as possible. No reply was made to this message; but the following day, the Melek came to my tent, with some of his attendants, and desired to see the merchandize I had brought with me. I shewed him articles of rich wearing apparel, and various other things; but this did not satisfy him, and he insisted upon seeing the contents of a small chest which I positively refused to open. He threatened to have it broken open; I remained immovable; and his attendants were preparing to



execute his threat, when the servant who had robbed me took the key from the place in which I had concealed it, and unlocked the chest. Every thing was taken out, and minutely examined. Many small articles appeared no more; some English pistols, and several other things, were reserved for the Sultan, and were to be purchased at the price his own servants chose to fix upon them; my telescopes, books, and wearing apparel, were graciously left me.

The valuation of the property the Melek had taken from me was made the next day, in contempt of my warmest remonstrances. Alas! of what weight are the remonstrances of a single man, though an Englishman and a gentleman, against an African despot, with a whole nation at his command! The whole was estimated at thirty-eight head of slaves, for human creatures are the currency of Dar Fûr, actual and nominal, and they are, like cattle, reckoned by the head. My property was worth about eighty of these transferable animals; and I exclaimed, "If bargain and sale be conducted by force, and your intention be to plunder, you had better take the whole, gratis!" In some countries, my indiscretion might have brought upon me personal abuse, in addition to injustice; in Dar Fûr, the oppressors were silent, and the next day two camels were sent me as a present.

I had now remained some days in the tent, so disregarded that I could rarely obtain water, though tormented with thirst; when I judged it expedient to return to Cobbé. The Melek did not seem anxious about my stay, and I preferred the shelter of a quiet hut to the small chance there appeared to be of my approaching the Sultan; I therefore hired

two Arabs, and, with the camels which had been given me, I returned to the place I had quitted for the court of Dar Fûr.

I remained some time at Cobbé; and as the eyes of the inhabitants became more habituated to me, I found my situation grow more pleasant. I visited the chief people of the place; and I associated with the graver men, who sit and converse, during the heat of the day, under a shed erected for that purpose; and though I was neither amused by the wit, nor instructed by the observations of these people, I was pleased with their good humour and mutual forbearance. I have often witnessed their mode of conducting a bargain; their legal arguments and cool discussions of right; and I had generally reason to be satisfied with their theory of morals.

I now determined upon making a second attempt to see the Sultan; but before I left Cobbé, the owner of the house in which I resided wanted me to sign a declaration that I had lost nothing during my residence there. This I refused to do, as it was here that my coral had been taken. He then called an assembly of Fukkara, or sacred judges, who, though they could not disprove the fact, exonerated the master of the house from any responsibility. I was greatly displeased, and I determined never to return to my present habitation; but I have since thought that as the theft was committed by my own agent, and in an apartment appropriated solely to my use, the sacred judges were not so much mistaken.

On my arrival at court, my friend the Melek Misellim being employed by his master in the south, I was put under the protection of the Melek Ibrahim, one of the oldest persons in authority there. When

I entered the court where he was sitting, he received my present with complacency, and bade me welcome; but I could collect from his conversation that he looked upon Europeans as a small tribe, cut off, by the singularity of their colour and features, and still more by their impiety, from the rest of the world. Ibrahim was a man of cool judgement, and clear and comprehensive understanding. He expressed strong surprize at my journey to Dar Fûr. I complained to him of the injustice done me; he assured me of redress for the past, and protection for the future; but I saw him only when I forced myself upon his notice, and received no compensation. At one time I resided three days with this officer, and was struck with the penetrating sagacity with which he investigated the claims of the respective suitors, and the equity and firmness with which they were terminated. I more than once saw the best constructed plans to disguise the truth, laid open; and designs to elude the purposes of justice, rendered abortive.

As all strangers at Dar Fûr are obliged to lodge within the inclosure of one of the natives, I established myself in the house of a man named Musa, who, though now only an inconsiderable officer, was the son of a former Sultan. Calm and dignified in his demeanour, Musa never insulted, though his religion taught him to hate. No motive could have prevailed upon him to eat out of the same dish with an unbeliever; yet he daily provided me with food from his kitchen. He would say, that as it was a precept of my religion to hate the prophet, he was bound to entertain the same sentiment towards me; but that he was neither obliged to injure me, nor could be excused for doing so.

During my residence here, I had an opportunity of seeing the Sultan, though at such a distance that I could not speak to him. He was seated at the door of his tent. Some person had mentioned to him my watch, and an Arabic grammar which I had with me; he asked to see both; but after having cast his eyes upon them, they were returned to me. The present I had brought was shewn him; he thanked me for it, and then rose to retire.

I afterwards got admission to the Sultan, when he was holding a divan in the outer court. He was then mounted on a white mule, and cloathed in a scarlet benish; he had on his head a white turban, which, together with a part of his face, was covered with thick muslin; and he wore yellow boots. His saddle was of crimson velvet, and without ornament. His sword, which was broad and straight, with a hilt of massive gold, was held horizontally in his right hand; and a small canopy of muslin was supported over his head.

After this, by means of a bribe, I gained admittance into the interior court, and found the Sultan hearing a cause in the language of the country. He was seated on a kind of chair, covered with a Turkey carpet. His face was then uncovered; his sword lay across his knees, and he was playing with a chaplet of red coral. Being near him, for the first time, I looked at him attentively, in order to have a perfect idea of his countenance. He was evidently discomposed, and, when the cause was ended, he retired abruptly; it being a common notion that the eyes of Franks have an evil influence. The Sultan was rather under the middle size; his eyes were full of fire; his features had great expression; his beard was short and thick; and his countenance, though



perfectly black, was very different from that of a negro. He seemed something more than fifty years of age ; but had great alertness and activity.

At another visit, the Melek Ibrahim presented the Sultan, in my name, with a piece of silk of Damascus. He returned the common answer on such occasions, "May the blessing of God be on him," and instantly retired, without giving me time to urge the suit to which I intended my present should have been the introduction.

I was now desirous of quitting the court of Dar Fûr, and determined to make a last effort to speak to the Sultan. It was a day of great public audience, and I found the monarch on his seat, under a lofty canopy, composed of various stuffs of Syrian and Indian manufacture, hung loosely on a light frame of wood ; no two of these pieces were alike. The place where he sat was spread with small Turkey carpets. The Meleks were seated at some distance on the right and on the left. Behind them stood a line of guards, dressed in the cotton shirts of the country, with caps having in front a small piece of copper, and a black ostrich feather, and holding a spear in the hand, and a shield made of the hide of the hippopotamus on the opposite arm. Behind the Sultan, were fourteen or fifteen eunuchs clothed in splendid habiliments of cloth or silk ; the space before him was filled with a multitude of suitors and spectators. A man, who stood on the left of the monarch, was proclaiming his titles during the whole time ; crying, with a loud voice, "See the Buffalo ! the offspring of a Buffalo ! the Bull of Bulls ! the Elephant of superior strength ! the powerful Sultan Abd el Rachman el Rashid ! May God prolong thy life ! O Master ! may God assist thee and render thee victorious !"



From this audience, as from all the preceding, I was obliged to retire, without having effected my purpose. However, in obedience to the Sultan's command, I gave in an exact statement of the property I had lost, and corroborated it by the strongest circumstantial evidence; when the Melek gave me the value of about four head of slaves, instead of the twenty-four, or twenty-five, which he had unequivocally declared to be my due.

I retired a second time to Cobbé; but before I went, I consulted Musa on the practicability of advancing further. Could I go through Kordofân to Sennaar? No, the road to Sennaar was impassable at present; the Sultan was as yet master of only one half of Kordofân, and the natives of that part which was not subdued would destroy any person who came from Dar Fûr. Could I go to the south or south west, with an armed expedition for acquiring slaves? No, I should encounter certain death by attempting it; the jealousy of those who accompanied me, and the hostility of the people attacked, would leave me no hope of escaping. Could I have a safe conduct to Bergoo, the first Mohammedan kingdom to the west? No, if I should attempt that route he had no hope of my succeeding, as the utmost distrust subsisted between the monarchs of Dar Fûr and Bergoo, and the most implacable hatred to Christians prevailed among the inhabitants of the latter country. Musa concluded by earnestly advising me to return to Egypt the first opportunity.

I had scarcely arrived at Cobbé, when I was sent for to attend my kind adviser on his death-bed. In five hours after my arrival, he expired, and there was no longer near the court a man of liberality and good sense whom I could consult. Of the property

which the Sultan's agents had purchased on my arrival, no part of the price had yet been paid: the monarch now addressed me personally, telling me that he should give orders for the payment of what was due to me, and that he should consult my inclination in all things. The reader is already aware that my inclination was to travel; and therefore, notwithstanding the information and counsel of my late friend, Musa, I urged my request to proceed further. The monarch, as might have been expected, made no reply; and, soon after, left the place of audience. I must acknowledge that this is a part of Fûrian breeding which I cannot but applaud. English frankness might have given a repulsive denial; English courtesy might have produced an insincere evasion; African silence steered between two extremes, and neither wounded the feelings of the suppliant, nor the truth. Soon after, I received a part of what was due to me from the Sultan. The payment was made in oxen; however, they supplied me with beef, which, otherwise, I should probably have wanted. The second payment consisted of five female camels, which I was directed to take after all the other creditors of the Sultan had made their choice. Those that remained were of so inferior a kind, that instead of two being equivalent with a slave, which is the usual computation, three would not have purchased one.

The merchants of Dar Fûr having collected the intended number of slaves for the market of Cairo, they impatiently expected from the Sultan leave to depart. This was delayed; and, in the mean time, the monarch sent two small caravans, on his own account, and that of two or three persons whom he particularly favoured; his merchandize selling at a

prodigious advance in Egypt, while the merchants were at a heavy expence at home, in the daily sustenance of their slaves. The Sultan pretended that the business of his caravans was to negotiate more advantageous terms of commerce with the Beys than his subjects had hitherto enjoyed.

Seeing all prospect of advancing further into the country hopeless, I resolved to join the caravan of merchants, when it should be allowed to depart; and, for the last time, I waited upon the Sultan, requesting payment of the sum which was yet due to me. It is probable that the Fûrian monarch or his servants estimated my property by a different standard from that which I used myself; for he gave me twenty lean oxen, worth about 120 piastres, for what I valued at 750. The state of my purse, however, made this small supply acceptable: and I bade adieu to the court of Dar Fûr, as I hoped, for ever.

My oxen having served to equip me for the journey, I joined the leader of the caravan for Egypt at Le Haimer, a small village about three days' journey north of Cobbé, where there was a tolerable supply of water, but no other of the necessaries of life.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## ACCOUNT OF DAR FÛR.

I SHOULD imagine that the population within the empire did not exceed 200,000 souls. Cobbé is one of the most populous towns; yet I cannot believe that the whole number of inhabitants, of both sexes, exceeds 6,000; and, of these, the greater proportion are slaves. I heard of only eight or ten towns of great population; the villages are numerous; but a few hundred persons form the inhabitants of the largest.

Rîl is one of the principal towns of Dar Fûr. It is situated near a large pool of water, which is never completely dry; a little to the east of this is a spacious house, built by the Sultan Teraub, eldest brother of the reigning monarch, who resided there. The present Sultan has no settled residence. The first place where I saw him was Heglig; the second was Tini; the third was Tendelti. Rîl is about 60 miles from Cobbé.

Mohammedanism was introduced into this country about the middle of the seventeenth century. Before this time the people seem to have formed separate tribes; and it was probably the same man who planted the religion, that first united them and became their sovereign. Arabs are numerous within the empire; but they are a distinct race, and generally marry among themselves. The tribes in the vicinity of the river pay a yearly tribute, of about



4,000 oxen, the others pay in camels, and when the tribute is neglected, the Sultan sends his soldiers, who collect the half of all they can find. The slaves resemble those of Guinea, and speak a different language from that of Dar Fûr.

An inveterate animosity subsists, and has subsisted as far as memory can extend, between the natives of Dar Fûr and those of Kordofân. As Kordofân lies between the people of Dar Fûr and the grand route to Mecca, through Sennaar and Suakem, this hostility may in part have originated in convenience wanted on one side, and denied or ill accorded on the other; but, to whichever quarter of the globe we turn our eyes, we shall find that near neighbourhood is a sufficient cause of enmity.

The monarch of Dar Fûr speaks in public of the soil and its productions as his personal property, and of the people as little else than his slaves. When manifest injustice appears in his decisions, the Fukkara, or Ecclesiastics, express their sentiments with some boldness; but all he fears is a general alienation of his troops, who may, at their pleasure, raise another of his family to the same envied superiority. At his death, the regal authority becomes the prize of the strongest claimant, whether it be a son or brother of the deceased sovereign.

The present Sultan succeeds two of his brothers, the latter of whom he vanquished in the field; and the sons of the former are still living, he having been so merciful as to sacrifice only one of them on his accession to the royal dignity. The survivors are wandering about, and living upon the parsimonious bounty of their royal uncle.

During the reign of his elder brother, Teraub, Abd el Rachman devoted himself to religion; and



when he entered the royal palace, after the defeat and death of his second brother, with affected sanctity he refused to see the treasures of the deceased, drawing the folds of his turban over his eyes, praying to God to preserve him from such temptation. He had also the moderation to confine himself to four wives, the number allowed by the prophet. By degrees, however, the pious Sultan gained courage enough to look temptation in the face; and he now passes whole days in contemplating heaps of costly apparel, and an endless train of slaves and camels, and has added nearly two hundred free women to the number of his wives.

Soon after the present Sultan came to the royal dignity, he sent a present to the Grand Signior of three of the choicest eunuchs, and three of the most beautiful female slaves that could be procured. It is said that the Othman Emperor had never before heard of the Sultan of Dar Fûr, but he returned an elegant sabre, a rich pelisse, and a ring set with a single diamond of no inconsiderable value.

When the Sultan appears out of his palace, he is attended by a number of troops, and several of his slaves carry a kind of umbrella over him, which conceals his face from the multitude. When he passes, all the spectators appear bare-footed, and commonly kneel. His subjects bow to the earth when they approach the throne, and even the Meleks creep on their hands and knees.

The troops of the country are not remarkable for either courage, skill, or perseverance. In their campaigns, much reliance is placed on the Arabs who accompany them. They are, however, able to endure hunger and thirst. I saw a body of troops reviewed which were to replace those who had died

of the small pox in Kordofân, which, it was said, amounted to more than half the army. The spoils that had been taken from the enemy were displayed on this occasion. They consisted of 80 slaves, male and female, but the greater proportion of the latter, 500 oxen, 200 large camels, and 80 horses; together with many smaller articles, which were borne by slaves. Many of the women were very beautiful, and were rendered still more interesting by the despondency which marked their countenances.

At another time I saw the execution of five men of note of one of the provinces, who had been detected in treasonable correspondence with Hashem, the hostile leader in Kordofân. They were brought prisoners to the residence of the Sultan, who, without any form of trial, issued his command for their instant execution, and they were brought, chained and fettered, into the market-place, and placed before one of the entrances into the palace. The executioner allowed them time only to utter some short prayer, when he plunged the knife into the neck of the eldest of them in the same manner that they kill a sheep. The captive fell and struggled for some time; the rest suffered in their turn. The two first bore their fate with firmness; the three last, who were very young men, were much agitated, and the youngest wept.

Till lately, the sovereigns of Kordofân had been deputed by the Mek of Sennaar, but in consequence of the dissensions in Sennaar, and the weakness of the government, that privilege was now assumed by Dar Fûr.

Rains, both frequent and violent, fall from the middle of June to the middle of September. If but a small quantity fall, the people of the northern dis-

trict are in great distress, and are sometimes reduced to eat the young branches of trees pounded in a mortar. During seven or eight months, the whole surface of the earth is dried up by the sun.

In the winter months, at seven o'clock in the morning, the thermometer stood at from  $49^{\circ}$  to  $82^{\circ}$ , and at three in the afternoon, at from  $66^{\circ}$  to  $93^{\circ}$ . During the summer months, at seven o'clock in the morning, it was from  $70^{\circ}$  to  $99^{\circ}$ , and at three in the afternoon, from  $86^{\circ}$  to  $101^{\circ}$ .

As soon as the rains begin, the proprietor of land goes with his assistants into the field, and having, with a sort of hoe, made holes at about two feet distance from each other, he throws the grain into them, and covers it with his foot. The millet remains scarcely two months before it is ripe, the wheat about three. Wheat is cultivated only in small quantities, and the present Sultan having forbidden the sale of it till his domestic wants are supplied, it is not to be purchased without difficulty. When the corn is sown, the Sultan, attended by his Meleks, and the rest of his train, goes out into the field, and makes several holes with his own hand. It is said that the same custom prevails in Bornou, and other countries in this part of Africa.

In harvest, the women and slaves of the proprietor break off the ears of grain with their hands. When the corn is separated from the husk, it is dried in the sun, and then buried in a hole in the earth, lined with chaff.

What are called gardens afford lentils, kidney beans, and water melons. Wood grows in great quantity. The characteristic qualities of the trees which most abound, are their sharp thorns, and the solid and durable nature of their substance. The

only fruits are tamarinds and dates, but the latter are few and small, dry and destitute of flavour. Tobacco is produced in abundance in Fertît, a country to the south of Dar Fûr, and in Dar Fungaro, one of the southern districts of this empire : it seems unquestionably to be of native growth.

The monarch has lands of his own, which are cultivated by his slaves, and which supply his household. He is also the chief merchant of his country, dispatching a large quantity of his own merchandize with every caravan to Egypt, and sending on his own account, by his slaves and dependents, the goods of Egypt to the adjacent countries of Soudan.

Slaves are brought in from the roads as they call it, that is, from all quarters, except Egypt. When an armed expedition for procuring slaves returns, the Sultan demands every tenth, but the merchants of the roads are obliged to wait six or eight weeks before they can dispose of their cargo, and human bodies being a perishable article of commerce, the number is by this time reduced to one half by death, and the Sultan's tenth becomes a fifth.

The Sultan is at no time approached upon business without a present. The merchants generally present light woollen cloths, carpets, arms, &c. the people of the country, slaves, camels, oxen, sheep, or their cotton mantles, called *Tokeas*, which are five, six, or eight yards long, and from eighteen to twenty inches wide, and form the covering of all the lower class of both sexes. At the ceremony of *leathering the kettle drum*, which is performed once a year, every housekeeper in the empire is obliged to appear at court, with a present in his hand. The present of the Melek of the Merchants was of the value of two hundred pounds sterling. On this occasion, the



Sultan's kitchen is open to all comers, and the troops are reviewed.

The houses of Dar Fûr are built with clay, and the people of higher rank cover them with a sort of plaster, which they colour white, red, and black. The apartments are of three kinds. The first is commonly formed in the proportion of twenty feet by twelve. The roof is composed of light beams, laid from side to side, over which is spread a layer of light wood, or, by those who can afford it, coarse mats; a quantity of camel's or horse's dung is spread over this, and the whole is finished with a strong and smooth coating of clay. They give the outside of the roof a small degree of obliquity, making spouts to carry off the water. This apartment is a tolerable protection from the rains, and is the repository of their property. It is provided with a door, of a single plank, hewn with the axe, and secured by a padlock. The walls are frequently twelve or fifteen feet high.

The second apartment is generally larger than the former. It has no door, and has no other roof than light rafters sloping like the roofs of our barns, and covered with thatch. This is the habitation of the master, and the place where he receives his company.

The third apartment is circular, and from fifteen to twenty feet in diameter; the walls of this, as well as of the last, seldom exceed seven or eight feet in height. In this the women lodge, and dress the food, and the floor of both is, by those who are attentive to neatness, covered with clean sand, which is changed as often as occasion requires. A house in which there are two of each of these apartments, is considered as a large and commodious one, fitted for the use of a merchant of the first order. A shed is fre-



quently added, under which the company sit and converse in the open air. The interior fence of the house is commonly a wall of clay, the exterior, invariably, a thick hedge of dead thorns. The thorny fence of the Sultan's palace is about ten feet thick, and ten feet high.

The houses of the villages need little description. When they rise above the denomination of a hut, they are circular, and are constructed with the straw of the maize, or some other material equally coarse and insecure. Tents are used only by the Meleks and great men. The war equipage of a soldier is a light mat, adapted to the size of his body.

The hair of the people of Dar Fûr is generally short, though sometimes it reaches to the length of eight or ten inches which is reckoned a beauty. It is rarely combed, or their bodies completely washed, but the skin is cleansed by a kind of farinaceous paste, which is applied to it with butter, and rubbed continually till it becomes dry.

The men of Dar Fûr are of a cheerful and convivial disposition. A company of them often sits from sun-rising to sun-setting, conversing and drinking their only fermented liquor, bouza, by which time a single man has sometimes swallowed nearly two gallons of this favourite beverage.

Dancing is practised both by men and women, and they often dance promiscuously. Such is their fondness for this amusement, that slaves dance in their fetters to the music of a little drum, while the time is marked by short sticks being struck upon long ones.

The vices of lying, cheating, and thieving, are here almost universal. No property is safe out of the sight of the owner, or scarcely in it, unless he

be stronger than the thief. In buying and selling, father and son glory in deceiving each other, and God and the Prophet are hourly invoked to give colour to the most palpable frauds and falsehoods.

The men of Dar Fûr take free women for wives, without limitation, or regard to the law of Mohammed.

In Dar Fûr, when a stranger enters the house, a modest woman retires, but she is content to retire only to a small distance, and she passes and repasses, executing the business of the family in the presence of men. None conceal their faces but the wives of the great. Women never eat with the men, but are present without hesitation while the men are eating. At Cobbé the most modest of them will enter the house of a merchant who is a stranger, alone, and make her bargains at leisure. Any freedom on the part of the merchant meets with great indulgence, and is even countenanced by the husband, if he find his advantage in it. The universality of this practice prevents it from being accounted either criminal or disgraceful.

Women in this country are labourers and animals of burthen. They assist in preparing the soil, sowing the grain, and gathering the harvest; and, having done this, they grind the corn, and convert it into bread. Even the clay buildings are constructed chiefly by women. It is not uncommon to see a man on a journey, mounted on an ass, while his wife is pacing many a weary step behind him, and carrying a supply of provisions and culinary utensils. The Sultan Teraub took about five hundred females with him in his wars in Kordofân; but when it is recollected that they had corn to grind, water to fetch, food to dress, and all menial offices to perform for a number of people; and that they all,

except a few acknowledged favourites, not only travelled on foot, but had burthens to carry on their heads ; it will be acknowledged that the monarch of Dar Fûr had not an undue regard for the female sex.

More than one privilege remains to the wife of Dar Fûr : no question of domestic economy is decided without her concurrence, and she has the liberty of scolding her husband, when the labour of the day is over. The daughters of the Sultan and the powerful Meleks are not only exempted from labour, but are authorized to become tyrants. Whoever is so unfortunate as to marry one of these, is a cypher in his own family, and has no voice in the disposal of his own children : the most extravagant caprices of his princess must not be thwarted, lest her displeasure should draw down upon him that of the sovereign.

The middle and inferior ranks of women wear only a cotton cloth wrapped round the waist, and, occasionally, another, of the same material and size, thrown loosely over the shoulders. Gold rings are sometimes worn in the nose by women of distinction ; and silver and brass rings from Egypt are worn on the ancles and wrists. The red legumen with the black spot, called *shûsh*, is much worn in the hair.

Nothing resembling current coin is found in Dar Fûr. Gold is seldom seen in the market : when it does appear, it is in the form of rings of about a quarter of an ounce weight each, in which state it comes from Sennaar. Egyptian gold coin none will receive but the merchants of that country ; and the few silver coins that find their way into Dar Fûr, are used as ornaments for the women. The chief currency, in addition to the bipeds before mentioned, supplied by the wars and the roads, is

composed of oxen, camels, cotton cloths, amber, and beads.

Beef is good and plentiful; milk is abundant, but not very palatable. The natives of Dar Fûr have a method of giving it an acid taste, and in that state it may be kept a few days, and is both good and wholesome.

Polenta is made of flour, boiled in water, and is eaten with fresh or sour milk, or a sauce made of meat, dried, and pounded in a mortar, and boiled with onions, &c. Polenta is also made into thin cakes, which are baked on a smooth substance, and eaten with milk or sauce, as the boiled; but in whatever form the grain be used, the rich cause it to be fermented before it is reduced to flour, which gives it a very agreeable taste.

The only good horses are brought from Dongola, and the other side of the Nile. They are perfectly well formed, and full of fire, yet tractable. Their action is grand; but it is said that they are not remarkable for bearing fatigue. The Arabs who breed them feed them with milk. They are never shod. Asses are much used for riding; few persons mounting horses, except the military, and those who are in immediate attendance at court. An Egyptian ass is valued at from one to three men, according to the weight he is able to carry; but an ass of Dar Fûr, which resembles that of Great Britain, is so much inferior, that he is reckoned equal only to the third or fourth part of a man.

Soudan affords many fine dromedaries; but those of Sennaar are the most celebrated. It is said that they will travel at the rate of ten miles an hour, and hold out for twenty-four hours together.

The dogs of Dar Fûr are of the same kind as



those of Egypt, and like those, they live upon the public. The common domestic cat is scarce, and is said to have been originally brought from Egypt.

In countries bordering on the empire of Dar Fûr, where water is in greater abundance, lions, leopards, and wild buffaloes are very numerous; and to these may be added the elephant, the rhinoceros, the camelopardalis, the hippopotamus, and the crocodile. The wild animals of Dar Fûr are principally the lion, the leopard, the wolf, and the buffalo; but these are seldom seen in that part of the cultivated country which I visited. Hyenas come in herds of six, eight, and often more, into all the villages at night, and carry off whatever they are able to master. They kill dogs and asses, even within the inclosures of the houses; nor are they greatly alarmed at the sight of a man, or the report of fire arms, which I have often discharged at them, and sometimes without effect. There is also a number of jackals; but they are harmless. Their uncouth cry is heard afar off, and wherever there are rocks to shelter them, their howling community dwells undisturbed.

The antelope and the ostrich are extremely common throughout Dar Fûr. The civet cat is not seen wild in the quarter which I visited; but is frequent further to the south. Many are kept in cages in the houses of the rich.

The Arabs hunt the lion, sell the skin, and eat the flesh, which they imagine renders them brave and warlike. They sometimes take lions young, and bring them to the merchants, who purchase them for presents to the great men in Egypt. I bought two lions, the one only four months old, and by degrees I rendered him so tame that he had acquired most of the habits of a dog. He satiated himself



twice a week with the offal of the butchers, and then slept for many hours successively. When food was given to the two lions, they grew ferocious towards each other, and towards any one who approached them: except at that time, though they were both males, I never saw them disagree, or shew any signs of animosity to the human race; even lambs passed them unmolested. When I was leaving the country, finding it impossible to take my lions with me, I shot one; and the other, either from disease, or the loss of his companion, died in a few days after. The Sultan had also two tame lions, which came into the market-place to feed, accompanied by their attendant.

The most remarkable bird is the white-headed vulture, a bird of surprising strength, and of which there are great numbers. They divide the field with the hyena; for the carrion that the latter leaves in the night, the former come in crowds to feed upon in the day. Near the extremity of each wing is a horny substance, not unlike the spur of an old cock: it is strong and sharp, and a formidable instrument of attack.

Copper is brought by the merchants from the territories of certain idolatrous tribes bordering upon Dar Fûr. It is of the finest quality, and very malleable, and is formed into rings of ten or twelve pounds each. Iron is found in abundance; and the pagan Negroes, on whom the Mohammedans look with contempt, are the artists who extract it from the ore. Silver, lead, and tin I never heard of in Dar Fûr, except as coming from Egypt. Gold is plentiful in the countries to the east and west; but little of it comes to Dar Fûr. The monarch occasionally obtains a small quantity for his own use from the east.

Alabaster and various kinds of marble are found within the limits of Dar Fûr. The rocks are chiefly grey granite. Of stone, adapted to building, or convertible into lime, either there is none, or it did not come to my knowledge. Fossil salt is common within a certain district.

The accounts which I was able to collect in Dar Fûr respecting other countries are as follow.

The people of Kordofân look with a favourable eye upon an intimacy with a daughter or a sister, which would be regarded as criminal in Europe. They consider the lover as one of the family, and take his part against those who offend him.

The whole route from Cobbé to Sennaar is 26 days and three quarters. At three days and a half short of Sennaar they come to a village built of clay, with a large palm-tree growing in the middle of it; the village is called Hellet Allais. It is situated on the western bank of the western Nile, as Sennaar is situated on the western bank of the eastern, or Abyssinian Nile: consequently the space between the two rivers must here be about three days journey. The western Nile is so broad that the human features cannot be distinguished on the other side; but the human voice is heard. Here is a ferry.

On the eastern side of the river, within sight of Hellet Allais is the town of Shillûk, or rather, as I suspect, the town of the Shillûk, inhabited by pagan Blacks, who wear no other covering than bands of long grass. These people command the river; and when they are transporting Mohammedans across it, they ask them who is the master of the river. The Mûslem answers, "God." "No," replies the Shillûk, "you must say that such a one," naming his chief, "is the master of it, or you shall

not pass." The Shillûks are represented as hospitable to such as come among them peaceably, and as never betraying those to whom they have once granted protection.

From Sennaar to Suakem, the port on the Red Sea, where the pilgrims from Soudan embark for Mecca, is nineteen days' journies; great part of the road is mountainous and rocky. The road to Gondar branches out of this at Teawa.

From Sennaar to Fazuclo is fourteen days. At three days is Dachala, on the western bank of the Abyssinian Nile, the inhabitants of which are Mohammedans. At ten days, is Gerbin, a mountainous place belonging to Sennaar, where malefactors are confined. The mines of Fazuclo, which contain much gold, belong also to Sennaar.

From Cobbé to the copper mines of Fertit, the distance is twenty-three days and a half, in a direction nearly south; and the western Nile is seven days and a half from the mines, in a direction generally east.

From Ril to Wara, the capital of Bergoo, is said to be twenty-five days and a half; nine days of which, reaching to the confines of Dar Fûr, the road is mountainous and rocky. Bergoo is said to extend twenty days from north to south, and fifteen from east to west. The people are remarkable for their-zealous attachment to the Mohammedan faith, and read the Koran daily. Within about a day's journey of Wara, are said to be eight large mountains, inhabited by people who have a distinct language, and who make brave soldiers.

From Cubabea in Dar Fûr, through Wara, to the city of Bornou, the capital of the kingdom of that name, is sixty days. This city is surrounded by a

wall, with four gates, opening to the four cardinal points.

Afnou, a country beyond Bornou to the westward, is said to produce such an abundance of silver, that coats of mail are made of that metal, as well as head and breast plates for the horses. The coats of mail are jointed and very beautiful.

Dar Kulla is one of the southern countries where the merchants of Dar Fûr go to purchase slaves. The chief article they carry with them is salt; twelve pounds of which will buy a male slave of twelve or fourteen years of age. Fifteen pounds are required for the purchase of a female; one being given for the girl's eyes, another for her nose, and a third for her ears. The tongue of a female slave is here esteemed of no value; in Europe, the tongue of a female would not have been forgotten.

The natives of Dar Kulla are said to be partly black, and partly copper-coloured; very cleanly, and very honest and punctual in their dealings with the merchants. The smallest trespass is punished by selling the son or daughter, nephew or niece, of the offender, which brings a great quantity of human merchandize to the hands of the merchants of Dar Fûr. When misdemeanours do not afford an adequate supply, recourse is had to violence. There is abundance of water in Dar Kulla; and on the river are ferry boats, which are impelled partly by poles, and partly by a double oar. The trees are so large that a single one, hollowed into a canoe, will contain ten persons; and pimento trees are in such plenty that a pound of salt will purchase four or five pecks of pimento. I believe this river to be the western Nile.

Blacks are said to have a firmer thicker skin than the whites. Blows of the whip, which, in a white would discharge, heal, and disappear in a few



weeks, often remain in a Negro more than a year. The bones of the Negro are whiter, heavier, and more solid than those of the European; his vision is distinct, his teeth are white and firm, and he retains them to old age. Both the people of Dar Fûr and the neighbouring Blacks are careful to keep them clean, which is done by rubbing them with the small fibrous branches of the tree called *Shaw*.

I remained at Le Haimer while the caravan was assembling; living in tolerable security in my tent, under a large tree, which sheltered it from the rays of the sun; and eating polenta, and drinking water with the camel drivers. I had collected eight camels for the journey; the best of them was stolen while grazing, and another died. I purchased one upon credit, to supply the place of the two; for my whole exchangeable property at that time amounted only to about eight piastres.

On leaving the country, our caravan comprised about 500 slaves. Our journey, once commenced, was continued without any thing remarkable, except the violent heat. We returned by the only caravan route to Egypt, the one by which we came; our provisions were indifferent, and in small quantity; and when I arrived at Siout, it was four months since I had eaten of animal food. Hard living, heat, and fatigue, had reduced my strength; but after reposing twenty days at Siout, I found myself perfectly recovered, and prepared to undertake another journey.

	North Latitude.		East Longitude.	
Siout . . .	27°	23' 40"	. . . . .	31° 24'.
Charjé . .	26	25 —	. . . . .	29 40.
Maghess.	25	18 —	. . . . .	29 34.
Selémé. .	22	15 —	. . . . .	30 15.
Cobbé . .	14	11 —	. . . . .	28 8.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## KENEH TO COSSEIR.

I AM aware that an accusation must have been brought against the traveller who, professing to see every thing, shall have quitted Egypt without seeing Cosseir. But that I might be enabled to do much, it was always my endeavour to accomplish the end I had in view by the shortest means, and at the least expence of time ; I therefore reserved Cosseir for my journey to Abyssinia ; and it will appear in the course of my travels that, with all my economy of time, I have been obliged to pass the road from Keneh to Cosseir twice.

At Keneh I joined a caravan which was conveying corn to Mecca. In half an hour's travelling we arrived at the foot of the hills which here bound the cultivated land of Egypt ; we then turned to the south, leaving these hills close on our left. At half past two we came to a well called Bir Amber, the well of Spices, and a dirty village of the same name, belonging to an inconsiderable tribe of Arabs, who live by hiring out their cattle to the caravans, and by attending them when required. Their houses are in the form of a bee-hive, and are made of potters clay ; the largest of them is not more than ten feet high, and the greatest diameter not more than six. At four o'clock we pitched our tents at a

place called Gabba, which is distinguished, not by houses of any kind, but by a few bushes.

On the second day we proceeded slowly into the desert. There were about two hundred men on horseback, armed with firelocks; lions, if you believed their word or their appearance; but I was not without some suspicion that fifty Arabs would have made these heroes fly without bloodshed. We now entered between two rows of mountains, not very high, but perfectly barren. Our road was on an open plain, never three miles broad, hard, and not perceptibly above the level country of Egypt. Here were neither trees, shrubs, nor herbage, nor traces of any living creature; not even a bird flying in the air. Here was no water of any kind, and the sun was burning hot. At half past three we encamped near a draw-well, the water of which was more bitter than soot; it had however, one desirable quality; it was cold, and afforded us outward refreshment. The place is called Legeta.

In the evening, twenty Turks from Caramania joined our caravan. They were all neatly dressed, armed with swords, carrying each a pair of pistols at his girdle, and a short gun. They were mounted on camels. They told me that they were neighbours and companions, who had set out to go to Mecca together; and that hearing there was an Englishman in this caravan, they had come to join him as one of their countrymen, and to make common cause with him against all enemies. How far must an Englishman be from the place of his nativity, when a Turk becomes his countryman! There was, however, in the present instance, another foundation for the claim of fellowship; for there is a district in Asia Minor which is called Caz Dangli; and

from this the Turks believe that the English drew their origin ; they therefore regard them as brethren whenever they stand in need of their assistance. These Turks seemed to be above the middling rank ; each had his little cloak bag neatly packed, which they gave me to understand contained money. They placed the portmanteaus in the tent belonging to my servants, chaining them all to the middle pillar ; for it was easy to see that the Arabs of the caravan had these packages in view from the arrival of the owners.

Our journey throughout the third day continued along the plain ; the hills on either hand being never more than three miles, or less than one mile distant. They were higher than those of the preceding day ; of a brownish, calcined colour, and still without either tree or herb. At four hours and a half we passed a mountain of green and red marble. In an hour and a half more I observed that the sand was red, with a purple tinge, which is the colour of porphyry ; and the valley, from hence to the end of this days' journey, is known by the name of El Hamra, which signifies porphyry. I dismounted here to examine the rocks ; and I discovered with great pleasure that here began the quarries of that valuable substance, but it was soft, brittle, and imperfect. All the rest of the afternoon we saw mountains of porphyry of a purple colour ; and it was very singular to observe that the ants, the only living creatures I had yet seen, were of a beautiful red, like the sand.

We had ascended imperceptibly all the way from Keneh ; but on the fourth day of our journey, after travelling five hours, we began to descend. The mountains on each side produced many different sorts of marble, twelve of which I selected. At

noon we came to a plain, planted at equal distances with single, spreading acacia trees; this, after rain, is a station of the Atouni Arabs. On the right of the plain I found porphyry and granite of very beautiful kinds. At a quarter past four we encamped at Koraim, a small plain of fine gravel, sand, and stones, with a few acacia trees interspersed.

On the fifth day we passed several defiles, and proceeded through others into a long plain forming a portion of a circle; at the end of which we came to a mountain, the greater part of it of the marble called verde antico, and by far the most beautiful of the kind I had ever seen. From hence we had mountains on both sides, which continued to Mesag el Terfowey, where we encamped at twelve o'clock. Water, which lies in cavities and grottoes in the rocks, was at five miles distance; but the people of the caravan having brought water from the Nile in skins, few of them would be at the trouble to fetch it. I too had brought water from the Nile; but this was the first fresh water we had met with since our leaving that river, and the first of any kind since Legeta; and believing I could not have too much of so necessary an article, while any of my water skins would hold more, I set out, with my camel drivers, to the wells in the rocks.

As the antelopes come every evening to the wells to drink, I concealed myself in hopes of obtaining some desert venison. I had not remained at my station above half an hour, when I saw first a single antelope walking with a stately step towards the water, and then four others closely following him. He seemed to be intrusted with the care of the flock; as the crowd was sporting or fighting at a distance, not thinking of danger. Though I was



wholly hidden, the leader seemed to have discovered me the moment I saw him ; for he advanced more slowly and with great caution : he was, however, within my reach, and I shot him so justly that giving one leap, five or six feet high, he fell dead upon his head. The rest fled to the mountains.

It was near midnight when we returned to our encampment, and we found our tents lighted up, which at that time of night was unusual ; the watch word was called for ; I gave it, and proceeded to my tent. Here I learned that while my people were asleep, two men had entered their tent, and attempted to steal one of the portmanteaus ; that the noise had awakened my servants, who seized one of the men, and had with great difficulty prevented the Turks from dispatching him with their knives ; it having been my constant orders to avoid such extremities if possible. My orders had not forbidden the use of sticks, as prudence might suggest ; and on this occasion they had been applied so liberally that the man was only known to be living by his groans. It appeared that he was the servant of Seedy Hassan, who might have been styled the conductor and commander of the caravan, if there had been either conduct or command in it.

Hassan desired me to come instantly to his tent. I returned for answer that it was past my hour of visiting in the desert. I ordered my servants to put out all extraordinary lights, as they might be construed into a mark of fear ; but I forbade every one to sleep, except our camel drivers, who had been fetching the water. I had with me ten servants, completely armed ; twenty Turks, who seemed worthy to be depended upon ; and four Janizaries from Cairo, who had joined us ; besides the attend-



ants upon our beasts : and as there were among them people who knew the wells, and one person who was a friend of the Atouni Arabs, there was nothing that could reasonably alarm us, even in a desert.

With great difficulty, we pulled down an old acacia tree, which, mixed with some camel's dung, roasted our venison. The cooking was bad, the meat worse, and I heartily repented having slain the guardian of the antelopes.

At the dawn of day, three Arabs delivered a message from Seedy Hassan, purporting that my people had killed a man ; that he desired I would give up the murderer, and repair to his tent to see justice done. I replied that if one of the thieves was dead, justice had already been done upon him ; and I only required that Seedy Hassan should give me up the other. By this time the caravan was in motion ; for intelligence had been received that, only two days before, 300 Atouni had watered at Terfowey ; and indeed there were marks of great resort to the well where we had filled our water skins.

I drew up my force at some distance behind the caravan, believing that I should make better terms with the Atouni without Hassan than with him. He sent to desire me to advance, that he might communicate to me the intelligence he had received respecting the Atouni, in order to put me upon my guard. I returned for answer that I was already upon my guard against thieves, and abettors of thieves ; against Arabs who pretended to be my friends, and Arabs who might openly attempt to plunder me. He then sent to say it was a cold morning, and to beg I would give him a cup of coffee. I desired one of my people to bring the coffee pot, and I rode up to Hassan ; the coffee was

poured out, and my servant was presenting it to him, when I said, "Hold! first let me know whether we are in peace." "We are in peace," replied Hassan, taking the cup out of my servant's hand, and drinking the coffee, "and now the past is past; the Atouni are to meet us at the mouth of the Beder (narrow pass); your people are better armed, and more accustomed to fight, than mine, and I wish you to go first. We will take charge of your camels; though my people have 4,000 of their own." "No," said I, "if I wanted water or provisions, I would go to meet the Atouni, who would treat me well; however, as you say you are the commander of the caravan, do you fight first; and when I see you heartily engaged, I will help you to protect the corn of the Sherceff of Mecca for his sake." I then said the prayer of peace for myself, and for the Turks, who would not approach Seedy Hassan.

Opposite to the place where we had passed the night, is Terfowey, a large mountain, partly of green marble, and partly of granite, with a red blush upon a grey ground, and oblong square spots. About forty yards within the narrow valley which separates this mountain from its neighbour, I saw a part of the shaft of an enormous obelisk of marble, nearly square, broken at the end, and towards the top. It was nineteen feet in the face, and nearly thirty feet in length. The bottom was perfectly detached from the mountain, and one whole side was separated. The ravine between the two mountains had been widened and levelled, and a road made up to the base of the block.

On the sixth day of our journey we decamped at half past one o'clock in the morning, and set out full of terror on account of the Atouni. We tra-

velled in a direction nearly east, and in an hour and a half we came to the defiles. At day-break we found ourselves at the bottom of a mountain of granite. Small pieces of granite and porphyry, which had probably been carried down by a torrent from quarries of ancient ages, were scattered over the plain; they were white with black spots, and red with black spots and green veins. After this, all the mountains on the right were of red marble, while those on the left were of a dead green; the former were of no great beauty; the latter are supposed to be serpentine.

About eight o'clock, we began to descend smartly, and in half an hour we entered a defile, having mountains of green marble on every side. At nine we saw, on our left, the highest mountain we had yet passed. It was of serpentine marble, with a large vein of green jasper spotted with red, running through about one third of its breadth. Its hardness was such as not to yield to the strokes of a hammer; yet the works of ancient times were more apparent in it than in any mountain I had seen. Channels for carrying water transversely, made it evident that this element was used in cutting these hard substances.

Here then ceases the wonder from whence the ancients procured the prodigious quantity of fine marbles used in their buildings. The immense store of marble still remaining forms a ridge between the Nile and the Red Sea; and it seems to be visible that those openings which I have called defiles are not natural, but artificial, and that whole mountains have been cut out at these places. Here too, another difficulty, how they transported these immense blocks, seems to be solved. These openings, made

by art, preserve as gentle a slope as possible towards the Nile, perhaps not more than one foot in fifty; the ground is hard, fixed gravel, capable of bearing the heaviest weights; which properties, united, would greatly facilitate the conveyance of the blocks from their native mountains to their embarkation on the Nile. I believed then that I had passed the road which the obelisks, columns, and statues of Tentyris, Thebes, and Apollinopolis had passed before!

About ten o'clock, descending very rapidly, with green marble and jasper on each side of us, but no other green thing in view, we had the first prospect of the Red Sea; and at a quarter past eleven we arrived at Cosseir.

The distance from Keneh to Cosseir is estimated at something more than 120 English miles; we had employed about 52 hours in actual travelling; and, considering the slow pace of loaded camels, it probably cannot be much more. There is another road to the north of this, which is said to be a longer distance by two or three hours, but it has been passed in three days and a half, or forty hours actual travelling.

Cosseir is a small, mud-walled village, built upon the shore, among hillocks of floating sand. It is defended by a square fort of hewn stone, mounting four small guns, which are of use only to terrify the Arabs, and prevent them from plundering the town, when it is full of corn going to Mecca. There are several wells of brackish water on the north-west of the castle; but the water in use is brought from Terfowey. There is a large inclosure with a high mud wall, and within it every merchant has a magazine, or shop, for his corn, or merchandize. The port is formed by a rock running out into the sea, which



defends vessels on the north and north east, as the houses of the town cover them on the north west.

The caravan from Assûan arrived at Cosseir during my stay there, escorted by 400 Ababdé Arabs, each armed with two short javelins, and mounted on camels, two on a camel, sitting back to back. They brought a thousand camels loaded with wheat, which they were going to transport to Mecca. The inhabitants of the town were in terror at such an influx of barbarians; every body shut their doors; and a Bey who happened to be in the place sent to desire me to remove into the castle for security. I had, however, no fear, understanding that these were the people of Nimmer, and remembering that they were my sworn brethren.

The next morning, as I was looking in the sea for shells, a servant of mine came to me in great consternation, and told me that the Ababdé, imagining Abd el Gin, one of my Arabs, was an Atouni, and consequently their enemy, had either actually cut his throat, or were about to do it. The man had very providentially brought me a horse; I mounted him immediately, and galloped through the town at full speed. If I was alarmed myself, I also alarmed others, who believed the cause of my speed was behind, rather than before me.

I had not galloped more than a mile over the sand when I began to reflect on the folly of the undertaking. I was going into the desert among a band of robbers, and might be as ill-treated as the man I was trying to save. But, seeing a crowd of people about half a mile before me, and thinking they might at that time be assembled to murder the poor simple honest fellow, all consideration of my own safety vanished.



Upon my coming near the Arabs, I was surrounded by six or eight of them on horseback. I was not very well pleased with my situation, for it would have cost these people nothing to have thrust a lance through my back, stripped me, and buried me in the sand, if, indeed, they would have taken this last trouble. However, putting on the best appearance in my power, I demanded steadily, "What men are those before us?" "They are men," was the answer, accompanied by a look which said, "And who are you that ask the question?" "Are they Ababdé? are they from Sheik Ammer?" said I. One of them nodded, and said sullenly, "Aye, Ababdé from Sheik Ammer." "Then Salam Alicum," said I, "we are brethren. How does the Nimmer? where is Ibrahim his son? Who commands you here?"

At the mention of the Nimmer and Ibrahim, the countenances of the Arabs changed, not to any thing more pleasant, but to an expression of great surprize. They had not returned my salutation by saying, *Peace is between us*, but one of them asked me who I was. "Tell me first," said I, "who is that before us." "It is an Arab, our enemy, guilty of our blood," replied the man. "It is not so," said I; "he is my servant, an Howadat Arab, whose tribe lives in peace at the gates of Cairo, as yours does at those of Assûan. I ask you where is Ibrahim, your Sheik's son?" "Ibrahim," replied the man, "is at our head, but who are you?" "Shew me Ibrahim," said I, "and I will shew you who I am."

I rode past these people and the party who had in custody my Abd el Gin. The poor fellow stood with a hair rope round his neck, and begged me piteously not to leave him; but without regarding his suppli-

cations, I made for the black tent, with a long spear thrust through the top, which I knew must belong to the chief, and I met at the entrance Ibrahim and his brother. I dismounted, and taking hold of the tent-pole, I said, "Fiarduc," that is, I am under your protection, literally, in thy land. The sons of the Sheik immediately recollected me. "What!" said they, "are you our physician and friend?" "Are you the Ababdé of Sheik Ammer," said I, "who cursed yourselves and your children if you ever lifted a hand against me or mine in the desert or in the ploughed field?" "We are the Ababdé of Sheik Ammer," replied Ibrahim, "and we still say, cursed be he, whether our father or our child, that lifts his hand against you in the desert or the ploughed field." "Then," said I, "you are accursed; for a number of your people are going to murder my servant; though, indeed, they took him from my house in the town, and perhaps that is not included in your curse." "That is nonsense," said Ibrahim: "who of my people have authority to take prisoners and murder, while I am here? Here! one of you bring my friend's servant to me." Then, turning again to me, he said, "If it be as you say, and one of them have touched the hair of his head, may God renounce me and mine, if ever he drink of the Nile again."

Abd el Gin arrived at the tent of Ibrahim, escorted by forty or fifty of the Ababdé, and when the affair was thoroughly investigated, it appeared to be as follows:

Abd el Gin was the man who had seized the thief that was attempting to steal a portmanteau belonging to one of the Turks; and, in revenge, Seedy Hassan, who doubtless was the patron of the thief, had told the Ababdé that Abd el Gin was an Atouni,

and further, that he meant to have given intelligence to his tribe, to enable them to surprise and plunder the caravan. Hassan had not said that Abd el Gin was my servant, or that I was at Cosseir; so the Ababdé had reason to believe they were only executing justice on an enemy and a spy.

All was now kindness, and a desire to make reparation; fresh medicines were asked for the Nimmer, great thankfulness shewn for what had been received, and a prodigious quantity of meat, excellently dressed, and served on wooden platters, with water from the coldest rocks of Terfowey, was set before me. I soon after took my leave, carrying Abd el Gin, who had been clothed from head to foot, along with me.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

SUAKEM, DAHALAC, MASUAH, ARKEEKO.

FROM Cosseir I sailed up the Red Sea to Suakem; and soon after I had anchored in the port, the nephew of an Arab Emir, a well-looking young man, handsomely dressed, came on board, and conducted me on shore. When we landed, two Janizaries ushered us into a plain room, at the upper end of which was a couch covered with a carpet and two cushions, and along the sides ran two low benches of stone, covered also with carpets. Around the room were hung sabres, matchlocks, European guns, and blunderbusses. The Dola, or Turkish governor, soon entered and seated himself. He was a dignified man,

and wore a dress of scarlet cloth, lined with blue silk. A common conversation passed, at the end of which sherbet was handed round, and I then took my leave.

The town of Suakem covers the whole of a small island. It is nearly in ruins; but two minarets, and the houses being white-washed and situated on an eminence, give it a handsome appearance at a distance. It has been kept from total ruin only by the caravans, which still come here annually from Sennaar, and the interior of Africa, in their way to Mecca. The town itself is all that belongs to the Sublime Porte, and its deputy, the Dola, dares not set his foot on the main land, which is possessed by a powerful tribe of Arabs, commanded by an Emir, the uncle of the young man who had conducted me on shore.

The people of Suakem are of a dark brown colour, their figure is in general fine, and the expression of their countenance good. Their hair, which is somewhat woolly, is turned into ringlets, and drawn out in points at the ends; it is dressed with fat, and sometimes powdered with red; a piece of wood like a porcupine's quill, is stuck through the hair at the top of the head, and serves the purpose of a comb. Their clothing consists of a white cotton cloth wrapped round the waist, and another thrown over the shoulders; nothing is worn on the head but the mass of wool and grease, which is a sufficient protection from the sun.

Suakem is situated in  $9^{\circ} 14'$  north latitude.

From Suakem I visited Dahalac, which is by far the largest island in the Red Sea, being thirty-seven miles in length, and eighteen in its greatest breadth. No rain falls here from the end of March to the be-

ginning of October; during these months it just affords sustenance to the few goats and antelopes that inhabit it. In the intermediate months, particularly in those of December, January, and February, are violent showers which deluge the island, and fill the cisterns with a sufficient quantity of water to supply the inhabitants in the dry season; for, as there are neither mountains nor hills in Dahalac, there are no springs. Of these cisterns, there yet remain a great number, hewn out of the solid rock; and so different are the present possessors from the constructors of these magnificent reservoirs, that they have not industry enough to keep one of them clear for the use of man. All are open to every sort of animal; and the water of two that I used tasted and smelled most foully of the dung of goats and antelopes.

A prodigious quantity of grass springs up immediately after the rain falls, and the goats give milk, which then forms the principal part of the sustenance of the inhabitants. The people of Dahalac neither plough nor sow. One half of them are constantly employed on the Arabian side of the sea; and these, by their labour, are enabled to furnish those who remain at home with dora (Indian millet) and other provisions; and when their time is expired, the labouring part return, and are relieved by the others. Their wives and daughters are very bold and expert fisherwomen. Several of them swam to our ship before we came to an anchor, begging handfuls of wheat, rice, or dora; and we were not easily freed from their importunities.

The village of Dobelew, at which we anchored, consists of about eighty houses, built with stone drawn from the sea, and covered with coarse grass. There are twelve such villages on the island, and



each has a plantation of doom trees round it, which furnishes the inhabitants with materials for their only manufacture. The leaves of this tree, when dried, are of a glossy white, like satin; and of these they make baskets of surprising beauty and neatness, staining part of the leaves with red or black, and working them into figures. I have known some of these baskets contain water twenty-four hours, without being penetrated by a single drop. The largest of them sell at Loheia and Jidda on the Arabian coast, for four commesh, or sixpence; each.

The complexion of men privileged to be idle is not darker at Dahalac than at Loheia; but those who go constantly to sea are of the colour of mahogany.

Dahalac depends upon Masûah; and, like that and Suakém, preserves only the name of the Turkish power.

From Dahalac, I sailed to Masûah, a small island immediately on the shore of Abyssinia, having an excellent harbour, and being the key to that country. It is scarcely three quarters of a mile in length, and about half that in breadth. One third of it is occupied by houses; one third by cisterns to receive the rain; and the other is set apart for the burial of the dead. A great tract of mountainous country, in all ages almost inaccessible to strangers, rises behind it.

Masûah was conquered by the Turks, whose principal auxiliaries were a tribe of Mohammedans called Belowee, inhabiting the coast of the Red Sea, under the mountains of the Habab, in about lat. 14°. In return for this assistance, the Turks gave the chieftain of their allies the civil government of Masûah and its territory, under the title of Naybe; and, upon the Basha's being withdrawn, this officer

remained in fact sovereign of the place; though, to save appearances, he held it by a firman from the Grand Signior. The Janizaries, at first established here as a garrison, married women of the country, and their descendants are subject to the influence of the Naybe. This petty sovereign depends for provisions upon the mountainous country of Abyssinia; for the tract of flat land behind him, which is called Samhar, is inhabited only from November to April, by some wandering tribes, who, during the other months, when this is a perfect desert, drive their cattle to the Abyssinian side of the mountains. The governor of Tigré, the nearest province of Abyssinia, who also bears the title of Ras, or Head, and is the second personage in that kingdom, can, at any time, starve the Naybe into a proper behaviour.

Masûah had been the slaughter-house of strangers; and, to avoid, as much as lay in my power, the fate that had befallen others, I sent on shore a Moor, my factor, with dispatches to a Greek at Adowa, the capital of Tigré, to whom I had letters. I informed Janni, the Greek, of my arrival in the country; told him that I had letters for the King and the Ras; and begged him to send instantly some man of confidence who might conduct me to Adowa. My factor applied to an agent of the Ras, who, that very night, dispatched a trusty messenger, with many of whom he was constantly provided; and this man, by ways best known to himself, arrived at Adowa in five days, and delivered my letter to my friend the Greek. To this measure I probably owe my life.

The day after my arrival at Masûah, I went on shore. I found two elbow chairs placed in the middle of the market place; on one was seated Achmet,

the nephew and next heir of the Naybe, who was receiving the duties upon the merchandize of the vessel, while several officers opened the bales and packages before him : the chair on his left hand was empty. He was dressed in a habit of white muslin.

Achmet rose when I approached him. We touched each other's hands, carried our fingers to our lips, then laid our hands across our breasts. I pronounced the salutation of the inferior, "Salam Alicum" (Peace be between us), to which Achmet immediately answered "Alicum Salam" (There is Peace between us.) He then pointed to the chair ; I declined the honour ; and he obliged me to sit down. My reader may smile at this ceremonial, as practised by a European ; but I can assure him that habit had now rendered the manners, as well as the language, of the East so familiar to me that, I should probably have felt more at a loss on being presented to my own sovereign at his levee. Achmet made a sign to bring coffee immediately : as the offering of meat or drink is the assurance that one's life is not in danger. Having drank it, I rose to take my leave, and was presently wet to the skin by a deluge of rose-water, which was showered upon me, on the right and left, from silver bottles.

A very decent house had been provided for me, which I had no sooner entered, than a large dinner was sent me by Achmet, with a profusion of lemons and good fresh water. My baggage soon followed, unopened.

Late at night I received a visit from Achmet. He was then in an undress ; callico drawers, a white cotton cap, and his body quite naked, with a barracan thrown loosely about him. He had no arms whatsoever. I rose up to meet him, thanked him for

sending my baggage, and observed that it was my duty to have waited upon him, rather than he should have had the trouble of coming to me. He took me by the hand, and we sat down together on two cushions.

After some enquiries concerning me, which I answered to his satisfaction, I addressed Achmet in the following manner. "It is a very proper custom, established all over the east, that strangers should make an acknowledgment for the protection they receive, and the trouble they are to occasion. I have accordingly a present for the Naybe, another for you, and another for the Kaya of the Janizaries. All these I shall deliver the first day I see the Naybe; but I repose upon you as my particular friend; and a separate acknowledgment is due to you in that character. I have been told that your agent at Jidda has been endeavouring to procure for you a pair of English pistols; if he succeed, they will probably be ordinary ones; but I have brought you a pair of excellent workmanship—here they are—and I hope you will accept them." Achmet was pleased with my present, and bade me sleep and fear no evil.

The passage from Masuah to the nearest part of the main land is not more than a quarter of a mile; but to Arkeeko, a considerable town at the bottom of the bay, and the general residence of the Naybe, it is about two leagues. The Naybe came from Arkeeko, attended by three or four servants, miserably mounted, and about forty naked savages on foot, armed with short lances and crooked knives: he was preceded by a drum formed of an earthen butter jar, covered with a skin of parchment. In the afternoon, I went to pay my respects to this potentate, and found him sitting on a large elbow chair, at the

head of two files of naked soldiers, who made an avenue from his chair to the door of his apartment. His only garment was a coarse cotton shirt, so dirty as to defy the power of soap and water, and so short that it scarcely reached to his knees. He was tall and lean, and his colour was black; he had a sort of malicious, contemptuous smile upon his countenance, and his physiognomy was altogether brutal and stupid.

I delivered first my firman from the Grand Signior, and then my letters to the Naybe, who laid them unopened beside him, saying, "Do you think I shall read all these letters? Why it would take me a month!" He received my present without speaking, or deigning to shew that he was pleased.

Having dispatched the vessel which brought me to Masuah, the Naybe sent me word to prepare a handsome present for him, which must be divided into three parts; one to be given him as the Naybe of Arkeeko; one as Omar Aga, the representative of the Grand Signior; and the other for having passed my baggage without duties or inspection. I answered that having a firman from the Grand Signior, and letters of protection from the minister of the Shereeff of Mecca, it was mere generosity in me to have given him a present as either Naybe or Aga; and that, as I was not a merchant, I had no customs to pay. On this, he sent for me to his house, and peremptorily told me that unless I had 300 ounces of gold ready to pay him in three days, he would confine me in a dungeon, without light, air, or meat, till my bones came through my skin.

During this time I was surprised that I saw nothing of my friend Achmet: I now understood that he was ill of a fever at Arkeeko; and believing my



skill in medicine might possibly be of service to him, I sent to the Naybe to ask leave to attend him. He answered in a surly manner, that I might go if I could find a boat; and the condition was a serious one; for he had taken his measures so well, that not a boat would move for money or persuasion.

Some days after, I received a message from the Naybe, desiring me to go to him. I found him in a large waste room, like a barn, which was his grand council chamber, and attended by about sixty Janizaries, and half naked officers of state. After having been asked a number of questions by the Naybe, and a few of the great men, to which they would not give me time to reply, the Naybe concluded by saying that, as I had offered to attend his nephew in quality of a physician, he would send me in chains to Constantinople, if I did not accompany his brother, Emir Mohammed, to the hot wells at Hamazen, in the same capacity: and this he added, was the resolution of all the Janizaries.

I had not yet spoken. I now asked which was the commanding officer of the Janizaries. A well-looking elderly man answered, "I am Sardar of the Janizaries." "If you are Sardar," said I, "this firman of your master orders you to protect me. The Naybe is a man of this country; not a member of the Ottoman empire. Upon my presenting my firman to him, he threw it aside like waste paper, while the greatest Basha in the Turkish dominions would have received it standing, then kissed it, and carried it to his forehead. Now I must tell you that my resolution is not to go to Hamazen, nor any where else with Emir Mohammed. Both he and the Naybe have shewn themselves my enemies; and I believe that to send me to Hamazen is to rob and murder

me out of sight." "Dog of a Christian," said the Emir Mohammed, putting his hand to his knife, "if the Naybe would murder you, could he not do it here, this minute?" "No, he could not," said the Sardar; "I would not suffer any such thing. Achmet is this stranger's friend, and he desired me to see that no injury was done him; Achmet is ill, or he would have been here himself."

"Achmet is my friend, and fears God," said I, "and had I not been prevented by the Naybe from seeing him, his sickness, before this time, would have been removed. I would go to Achmet at Arkeeko, but I will not go to Hamazen, nor ever again to the Naybe, here, in Masûah. Whatever happens shall befall me in my own house."

I then quitted the Naybe without ceremony; and, on turning into my own gateway, a man passed close by me, saying distinctly, in my ear, though in a low voice, "Be not afraid."

Achmet was not yet recovered, and being very desirous to see me, he sent a boat from Arkeeko, with four Janizaries, to bring me to his house. I found him under the worst of regimens, and very apprehensive that he was either poisoned or bewitched. I remained with him two nights, by which time the remedies I had administered had totally freed him from fever; and he told me at parting, that he would come the next day to Masûah, with boats and men, to deliver me from the bondage of that place, and bring me, my people and baggage to Arkeeko.

On my arrival at Masûah, I was told that three men, one a servant of Janni, the Greek of Adowa, the others servants of the Ras, and wearing the royal badge, a short red cloak, lined and turned up

with dark blue, had arrived from Tigre. These people were the bearers of letters, purporting to be from the Ras, ordering the Naybe to furnish me with necessaries, and dispatch me immediately; as I was physician to the King of Abyssinia, whose state of health required my assistance. I afterwards found that these letters were fabricated by Janni, who was the confidential servant of the Ras, the Ras himself being at Gondar. To me Janni sent a message, bidding me heartily welcome, and advising me to come to him as speedily as possible.

The houses of Masûah are in general built with poles and coarse grass; but there are about twenty of stone, six or eight of which are two stories high. The Banians were once the principal merchants; but their number is much reduced, and they are now manufacturers of ear-rings and other ornaments for the women on the continent. The climate is extremely unwholesome. It is a general custom for people to fumigate their houses with myrrh and incense before they open their doors in a morning; and when they go out at night, or early in the day, they have always a small piece of rag, highly scented with these perfumes, which they put into each nostril, to preserve them from the bad effects of the air.

The greatest height of the thermometer during my stay at Masûah, was  $93^{\circ}$  at two o'clock in the afternoon, in the shade; the lowest was  $82^{\circ}$  at four in the morning.

Masûah lies in about  $15^{\circ} 36'$  north lat.

I joined Achmet at Arkeeko; and the next morning I struck my tent, got all my baggage in readiness, and waited upon the Naybe. He was very desirous to know how the intelligence of my arrival had reached Adowa, a particular on which I did

not choose to satisfy him. He told me, with a grave air, that he was willing to further my journey into Abyssinia to the utmost of his power, provided I made him the acknowledgment which was his due from all passengers into that country; that, as I was a man above the common sort, to offer him less than a thousand patakas would be to affront him; but that, out of regard to the governor of Tigre, to whom I was going, he would be content with three hundred, on condition that I would swear not to divulge it, that he might not incur the disgrace of having accepted so small a sum.

To this I answered, in the same grave tone, that I thought he ought not to be content with taking three hundred patakas, when receiving a thousand would be so much more honourable and profitable, and he should therefore put that sum into his account with the governor of Tigre, who would doubtless settle with his honour and his interest at the same time; or if he rather chose to send me to the Shereeff of Mecca, he might settle accounts with that sovereign for my trouble and loss of time. The Naybe muttered between his teeth, "That devil!"

"Look you," said one of the servants of the King of Abyssinia, "I was ordered to bring this stranger to my master; I heard no talk of patakas, and I must not lose my time here." Then, taking his short red cloak from under his arm, and giving it a shake to make the dust fly from it, he put it on his shoulders, and stretching out his hand very familiarly, he added, "Naybe, within this hour I am for Habbesh (Abyssinia); my companion will stay here with the stranger; give me my dues for coming here, and I will take back any answer that either you or he have to send." The Naybe looked very silly,

and ordered the king's servant not to go that day ; but to come to him on the morrow, when his letters should be prepared, and he would expedite us for Habbesh.

Early in the morning, I struck my tent again, and at eight o'clock I went to the Naybe. He enumerated the difficulties of the journey ; the rivers, precipices, mountains, and woods we had to pass ; the number of wild beasts every where to be met with ; and the savage people who inhabited the country ; though most of these last, he said, were luckily under his command, and he should oblige them to render us every assistance. He then bade two of his secretaries to write the proper letters, and in the mean time ordered us coffee.

A servant now entered in great haste, and covered with dust, and delivered letters to the Naybe. He read them with much apparent uneasiness, and then lifting up his eyes, he thanked God that we were not already on our journey ; for that the Hazorta, the Shiho, and the Tora, the three nations that possessed that part of Samhar through which we must pass in our way to Dobarwa, had driven away his servants, and declared themselves independent. Angry as I was at so bare-faced an imposition, I could not help laughing. The Naybe desired to know the meaning of an expression of feeling so different from what he expected. " Can you wonder," said I, " that I do not credit so gross a cheat ? This morning, in the presence of your nephew, Achmet, I spoke with two Shiho, just arrived from Samhar with letters for Achmet, which said that all was peace : have you later intelligence than this ?"

I rose abruptly to go away, when the Naybe laughed in his turn ; every feature of his treache-



rous countenance was altered and softened; and, for the first time, he bore the appearance of a man. He said, "What I mentioned about the Shiho was only to try you; all is peace; and I will give you a person who would take you in safety, even if there were danger."

Our guide was a handsome young man, to whom the Naybe had married his sister. The common price paid to such a conductor is three pieces of blue Surat cotton cloth; but the Naybe demanded thirteen for his brother-in-law, which, to get rid of him with some degree of good grace, I willingly agreed to.

Arkeeko consists of about four hundred houses, a few of which are built with clay; the others of coarse grass, like reeds. The Naybe's house is of the latter materials, and not distinguished from the rest. I left the place immediately after my interview with the Naybe.

## CHAPTER XX.

## ABYSSINIA.

## DIXAN, ADOWA.

FROM Arkeeko, we took our road southward, along the plain, which is here not more than a mile in breadth; and after travelling one hour, I pitched my tent. From hence the mountains of Abyssinia appeared in three ridges; the first, of no considerable height, full of gullies and broken ground, and thinly covered with shrubs; the second, higher, and steeper, more rugged and bare; the third, still higher, sharper, and uneven edged. In the evening a messenger from the Naybe appeared at my tent, and took away the guide.

The next day Achmet brought back the guide; and while he was drinking coffee in my tent, he said, "You are not to go to Dobarwa, though that is the best road; the Naybe is master there; and the safest road is preferable to the easiest. You will go by Dixan, where I am master, and I have written to the people there in your favour." Achmet repeated his orders to the guide; and we all rose, and said the prayer of peace. His servant then gave him a narrow web of muslin, which, with his own hands, he wrapped round my head; and, taking leave, he said, "He that is your enemy is mine also."

In the evening, and during a part of the next day, we continued our course in a southern direction along the plain, which was firm and gravelly, and covered thick with acacia trees. We then turned westerly through an opening in the mountains, which was nothing more than the bed of a torrent. This was our only road, and we could not wish for a better: it was sand; and the moisture its banks had imbibed had protected it from the sudden influence of the sun, and they were distinguished by a greater degree of verdure and vegetation.

We this day met a party of Shiho, with their wives, families, and flocks, descending from the tops of the mountains to the pasturage of the plains near the sea; having consumed that on the Abyssinian side. They were in all from forty to fifty persons. They were all clothed; the women in coarse cotton shirts, reaching down to their ankles, girt about the waist with a leathern belt, and having very large sleeves; the men in short cotton drawers, and having a goat's skin over the shoulders. Each had a lance in his hand, and a knife at his girdle. They had the advantage of ground, as they were coming down the mountain, and we were ascending; yet I observed they seemed rather uneasy at meeting us: they were indeed escorting all their worldly riches, a prodigious number of goats and other cattle.

The Shiho were once very numerous; but they have suffered much from the ravages of the small-pox, which they brought from Masûah. They are the blackest of the tribes bordering upon the Red Sea; they live either in caves in the mountains, or in small conical huts, built with thick grass, like reeds.

In the evening our road became stony and uneven, and we pitched our tent on the side of a small green

hill at some distance from the bed of the torrent. The higher mountains were hidden by clouds, and the thunder rolled at a distance; when, on a sudden we heard an explosion above us louder than the loudest thunder; and the river, which scarcely ran when we passed it, came rolling down about the height of a man, and the breadth of the whole bed it had ever occupied. It did not advance to our station on the hill; and by morning the current had subsided.

We now entered the district of the Hazorta, and saw several huts and families of these people, who testified neither surprize nor curiosity on our appearance. Their flocks were feeding on the branches of the trees and bushes which grew by the side of a stream, regardless of the grass they were treading under foot. The Hazorta are of a colour resembling copper. They are inferior to the Shiho in size, but are very agile. All their substance is their cattle; yet they do not kill them, but live chiefly on their milk. They dwell either in caves, or in cages just large enough to hold two persons, each cage covered with an ox's hide. Some of the better sort of women wear copper bracelets on their arms, beads in their hair, and a tanned hide over their shoulders.

This day we passed over a plain so thickly covered with acacia trees, that our hands and faces were torn with the strokes of their thorny branches. Here we first saw the dung and tracks of elephants; some trees were thrown down from their roots, some were broken off in the middle, and branches, half eaten, were strewn on the ground. We afterwards saw the caper tree, which here grew as high as a tall English elm; its flower was white; and its fruit, though not ripe, was as large as an apricot.

We passed the night surrounded by black mountains, and nothing else visible but the heavens.

The next day our road still wound among mountains; and the following day we began to ascend the eminences which form the roots of the great mountain Taranta. The road was bordered on each side with jujeb trees of great beauty, and sycamore trees deprived of their branches by the barbarous axes of the Hazorta. We every where saw immense flocks of Antelopes, and coveys of Partridges of a small kind; neither of which seemed to consider us as enemies; and, in three hours, we arrived at the foot of the mountain. We began to ascend on a most rocky uneven road, very steep, with large ravines made by torrents, and monstrous fragments of rocks; and with great exertions, about half past two o'clock, we found ourselves and our baggage half way up this terrible mountain. Here the road divides; that on the right leading to Dixan; that on the left to Halai.

Here bread was to be baked, and supper to be dressed, and we found it impossible to pitch our tents; for there was not sufficient earth on this part of the bare side of Taranta to hold fast a tent-pin. There were, however, caves near us; and in these we found a quiet, and not inconvenient place of repose.

The upper part of the mountain was more steep, rugged, and slippery than the lower; but not so full of holes, or large stones. Our knees and hands were cut by frequent falls, and our faces torn by the thorny bushes. The upper part was closely covered with the berry-bearing cedar. At length we gained the summit, upon which is situated a small village, chiefly inhabited by servants and shepherds,



cultivating the grain, and keeping the flocks belonging to the inhabitants of Dixan.

The people here were of a dark complexion, bordering upon yellow; the cows and bulls were of exquisite beauty, for the most part completely white, with large dewlaps, wide horns, and hair like silk. The sheep were large and black; instead of wool, they had hair, remarkable for its lustre and softness. The goats were of the largest size, but their hair was not long. The plain on the top of Taranta was in many places sown with wheat, which was then ready to be cut down. There is no water on the top of this mountain, except what is deposited by the rains, in the hollow of the rocks, and in pits prepared to receive it. At mid-day the thermometer stood at 61°, and at six in the evening at 59°. I killed an eagle here, which was about six feet ten inches from wing to wing. The ball having wounded it but slightly, when it came to the ground it attacked the men and beasts near it with such force and fierceness, that I was obliged to dispatch it with a bayonet.

We descended the mountain by a broken and uneven road, and after mounting a small hill, we had a distinct view of Dixan. Our road then became good, and the descent easy, and in a short time we arrived at that town. I had been eight days in coming from Arkeeko hither, but only twenty-seven hours of this time had been passed in actual travelling.

Dixan is the first town in Abyssinia on the side of Taranta. It is built on a hill in the form of a sugar loaf, surrounded by a deep valley, like a trench. There is a high and low town, divided by a considerable space: the former occupies the top of the hill, and is inhabited by Moors; the latter is the residence of Christians. A road winds spirally up the

hill, till it ends among the houses. The chief of the Christians was a dependent of my friend Janni at Adowa, and at his house I stopped, declining the invitation of the Moor to whom Achmet had written in my favour. I had the satisfaction of seeing my baggage stowed safe in a kind of court, inclosed by a strong wall; and the Moor presented me with butter and honey.

It is true of Dixan, as I believe of most frontier towns, that they are the resort of depraved persons on both sides. This town is well peopled by Moors and Christians, whose only trade is that of selling children. The priests of Abyssinia are openly concerned in this nefarious practice; and the governor of the province grants his licence for it, on being paid a certain number of firelocks for each dozen or score of slaves. Abyssinia yearly exports about 500 slaves from Masûah to Arabia, of which number 300 are Pagans from the market of Gondar, and 200 are Christian children, kidnapped from their parents. The Naybe receives six patakas, or about thirty shillings a head, upon these exports.

Dixan is in lat.  $14^{\circ} 58'$  north, and long.  $40^{\circ} 7' 30''$  east. From hence we discovered a great part of the province of Tigre, full of high and tremendous mountains.

On leaving Dixan, we encamped under a daroo tree, whose branches reached within four feet of the ground, and formed a circle forty four yards in diameter. This tree, and a river by its side, form the boundary of the territory which the Naybe farms from Tigre, and here the jurisdiction of that petty despot ended. One of the king's servants, making a mark on the ground with his knife, declared, that if our guide from Masûah, or any other man belonging to the

Naybe, offered to pass that mark, he would bind him hand and foot, and tie him to a tree, where he should be left a prey to the lion and hyena. They all returned, and here my persecution from the Naybe finished, and I recovered a portion of that tranquillity to which I had been a stranger while I was in his power.

We passed a number of small villages, situated on the tops of hills, and one, called Addicota, planted on a high rock, the side of which, next to us, was perpendicular like a wall. I encamped under a mountain on whose summit was a village consisting of about eighty houses, the present residence of the Baharnagash. This title, as its meaning imports, once belonged to an independent sovereign; Bahar signifying sea or river, and Nagash, or Nagashe, being a regal appellation; but the governor of Tigre had annexed to his own provinces what he pleased of his domains, and had reduced the Baharnagash to the situation of his servant.

The Baharnagash had formerly the silver kettle-drum and the standard, the ensigns of sovereign power; these have been taken from him. He still preserves his privilege of being crowned with gold; but at the same time he has a cloak thrown over him, one side of which is white, and the other blue; and he is informed that the white is his, if he preserve his allegiance, and the blue, the colour of mourning, if he forfeit it.

This chief descended from his mountain, and paid me a visit in my tent. He was a little, thin man, of a dark olive complexion, with his hair shaved close, and a cowl on his head. His legs and feet were bare. He wore a pair of short trowsers; a girdle of coarse cotton wrapped several times round him, in which was stuck his knife; and a web of

cotton, neither new nor clean, was thrown about him. He was on horseback, and had seven attendant horsemen, with about a dozen on foot, ill armed and badly equipped. The king's servant told this officer that he must furnish us with a kid, and forty loaves of bread, immediately, and that he might charge them as a part of the revenue paid to the king.

The next day the Baharnagash renewed his visit, with two drums beating, and two trumpets sounding before him, attended by horsemen with shields and lances, and two servants on foot; the latter brought me three goats, two jars of honey beer, and some wheat flour; in return for which I gave the Baharnagash some razors, knives, and steels for striking fire. We this day saw a plain sown with the different kinds of grain this country produces, wheat, barley, teff, tocusso, sesame, and nook; the last of these is used for oil.

On the following day we had scarcely advanced a mile, when we were overtaken by a party of about twenty armed men on horseback. These proved to be the cavalry of my friend the Baharnagash, who had sent them to protect us from the Shangalla, the native blacks of the country, who dwell on the right, and sometimes make incursions into the flat land before us. We passed the plain with all diligence, having been informed that many caravans had been cut off here; and having gained the opposite hills, I sent back my guard perfectly content. This plain extends twelve miles towards the west; such flat countries are very rare in Abyssinia. The soil is excellent, but the inhabitants on each side dispute the possession. The whole of them go armed to plough and sow, they finish their work in one day, and seldom complete it without a battle. We now



entered a close country, covered with brushwood, wild oats, and high grass; in many places rocky, and scarcely leaving a narrow passage. Here we saw a goat, just killed by a lion, whom our approach had probably frightened from his prey. Every one cut off a portion of the flesh, for the Abyssinians eat what has been killed by the lion, but they do not eat that which has been killed by the leopard, hyena, or any other beast; nor will they touch a bird that has not been killed by the knife, except by the tip of the wing.

There are five places between Masûah and Adowa where a duty is to be paid; the farmer of these duties levies what he thinks proper upon each caravan, and if his demands be not complied with, travellers have been frequently detained, and sometimes plundered. We had now arrived at the last of these, which is called Kella, or the Castle; because the mountains on each side run, for a considerable extent, straight, and even, like a wall, with gaps at certain distances. The name of one of these rocks is Damo, and it was anciently the prison of the princes of the royal family.

It is the practice of the sovereign, in many parts of Africa, to murder or mutilate those of his relations who might dispute with him the regal authority; and this barbarity may have arisen, in some measure, from the general custom which pronounces all the princes equally capable of succeeding, without regard to the right of primogeniture. The Abyssinians have endeavoured to obtain the same security by less violent means, and have confined those princes who might claim the crown, and involve the country in civil war. In the tenth century, Judith, Queen of the Falasha, a colony of Jews who possess an inde-



pendent sovereignty in Abyssinia, surprized the rock Damo, and slew the whole number of princes there to the number of four hundred. One only remained to continue the race.

When the royal family was restored, and became sufficiently numerous to render their confinement expedient, Geshen, a very steep and high rock, in the province of Amhara, was chosen for the residence of the princes. In the year 1540, a Mohammedan chief, governor of Arar, one of the southern provinces of Abyssinia, formed the resolution of attempting this mountain. On his approach he found it abandoned by the troops appointed to guard the foot of it, and, led by a menial servant of the princes above, he and his soldiers ascended without opposition, and slew them all, and every individual of their attendants, of either sex.

About the year 1640, Wechné, a mountain about fifty miles south of Gondar, in the small province of Belessen, was appointed as the prison of the princes of the royal family; and such it still remains. None are permitted to go up, but the women who carry water. There was formerly a cistern, but it is now in ruins. There are near three hundred persons on the mountain. The exiled princes are taught to read and write; but nothing more. They are allowed to marry; but no person of rank will give his daughter to one of them.

It was at Kella that we first saw the roofs of the houses of a conical form, a proof that the tropical rains were here become more violent.

The people at Kella would not sell provisions for money, but required merchandise by way of barter; we therefore opened shop, by spreading a cloth on the ground, and displaying our goods upon it. At

the sight of this, hundreds of young women poured down upon us, on every side, from villages I did not see ; so that the country must be surprisingly populous. Beads are a grand article of commerce at Kella, but the colour and size of these are regulated by fashion. Mine were chiefly large, red and green, and it unfortunately happened that, at this time, the beauties of Tigre wore small blue, or white, or large yellow. The ladies therefore rejected my merchandise with great disdain and vociferation. A small quantity of the fashionable sorts was then produced, which excited so great a sensation among them, that they were in great danger of becoming thieves, and were only rescued from it by the application of sticks and whips to their arms. The men who came with them, laughed at the discipline bestowed on the women ; but they took great pride in appearing the next day with strings of white beads round their dirty black legs. We were here plentifully supplied with flour, butter, honey, and excellent pumpkins.

On the second day from Kella we came in view of the high mountains of Adowa ; some of which are perpendicular rocks ; others shaped like obelisks ; and others broken into different fantastic forms.

Having ascended a mountain, and passed a plain with a village on its top, we began the most rugged and difficult descent we had met with since Taranta, and at the bottom we pitched our tent. From hence are seen two roads ; that on the west leading to Gondar ; that on the east to the Red Sea. On our right was the high and rugged mountain of Samayat. The place is called Ribierani, which in Tigre signifies, *They are coming this way* ; these words being formerly used by one of the Banditti of the neighbouring villages, who was stationed here, to give notice to the rest, of the approach of a caravan.

The rivulet of Ribierani is the source of fertility to the country adjoining; as it is made to overflow every part of this plain; and supplies it with a perpetual store of grass in some parts, and two or three harvests in a year, in others. We perceived that we were now approaching a considerable town, by the care with which every small piece of ground, and even the steep sides of the mountains, when covered with soil, were cultivated.

The next day, after three hours travelling on a very pleasant road, over easy hills, and between hedge-rows of jessamine, honey-suckle, and many kinds of flowering shrubs, we arrived at Adowa, the capital of the province of Tigre, and the proper residence of the Ras, or governor. We had been seven days on the road from Dixan to Adowa; of which the whole time passed in actual travelling was twenty-five hours and a half.

Janni, my kind and hospitable host, had sent servants to conduct me into the town, and met me, himself, at the outer door of his house. He had his own short white hair, covered with a thin muslin turban, and a thick beard, as white as snow, reaching down to his waist. His dress was of white cotton, girded with a red silk sash, embroidered with gold, and on his feet were sandals. He had a number of servants and slaves of both sexes around him.

Janni conducted me through a court yard, to a very neat and spacious room, furnished with a sofa of silk, and Persian carpets and cushions. Flowers and green leaves were strewn over the court, and evergreens were placed in the windows, and on the sides of the room, in commemoration of the approaching festival of Christmas. I stopped at the entrance; for my feet were dirty, torn, and naked; and Janni

was so shocked at my saying I had performed this journey on foot, that he burst into tears, uttering reproaches against the Naybe, and telling me that he, himself, had twice prevented the governor of Tigre from going to Masûah in person, and sweeping him from the face of the earth. Water was immediately brought to wash my feet; and it was with the greatest difficulty that I prevented my respectable host from performing this office himself. This was no sooner finished, than a great dinner, exceedingly well dressed, was brought in; but no entreaty could prevail upon Janni to sit down with me, or prevent him from standing, with a clean napkin in his hand, to wait upon me.

Adowa is situated on the declivity of a hill, on the western side of a small plain, surrounded every where by mountains, and watered by three rivulets which are never dry. The town contains about 800 houses. They are built of rough stone, cemented with mud; lime being used only at Gondar; the roofs are in the form of cones, and are thatched with a kind of reedy grass, something thicker than wheat straw. The houses are pretty regularly disposed in streets and allies, and each has an enclosure round it of hedges and trees. The number of trees so planted in all the towns gives them at a distance the appearance of woods.

Adowa is the seat of a very valuable manufacture of coarse cotton cloths, which circulate throughout Abyssinia instead of silver money, and which form the habit of the common people. Each web is about eight yards long, and three quarters of a yard wide, and is worth about a dollar. There are also fine cotton cloths manufactured here, which are excelled only by those of Gondar.

Adowa was not formerly the capital of Tigre; but became so on the accession of the present governor, whose estate lay in it, and in its vicinity. His mansion house was situated at the top of the hill; but was distinguished from the other houses only by being larger. It was now, in the absence of the governor, the residence of his deputy; but it was more a prison than a palace; upwards of three hundred persons being confined in it, in irons, and most of them in cages, like wild beasts. These were chiefly confined with a view to extort money from them; and even when they had paid the sum demanded, they did not always obtain their deliverance from the hands of the merciless tyrant.

In the neighbourhood of Adowa, the soil yields three harvests of grain annually; yet the husbandman is always poor and miserable. The landlord furnishes the seed, on condition of receiving half the produce; but I was told that he was an indulgent master who did not take the half of what remained. The cattle roam at discretion among the mountains, but these are so steep and broken, that the greater number of the animals are goats.

Adowa is in lat.  $14^{\circ} 10'$  north.



## CHAPTER XXI.

AXUM, SIRE', THE TACAZZE', LAMALMON, GONDAR.

THE next place of note I came to was Axum, the ancient capital of Tigre, which is situated about twelve miles west of Adowa. The present town consists of about six hundred houses. There are several manufactures of coarse cotton cloths; and the monks of the adjoining convent make excellent parchment of goat skins.

There are at Axum very extensive and magnificent ruins, which are so different from any other buildings in Ethiopia, that they are supposed to have been erected by the Egyptians. In one square there are forty obelisks. One of these, which is still standing, is of a single block of granite, full 60 feet in height. It is covered with ornaments, in bold relief, but they are not hieroglyphics: two obelisks yet larger than this are fallen.

We then proceeded south, by a road cut in the mountain, having on the left a wall of solid native rock, more than five feet high. At equal distances are hewn, in this wall, pedestals, on the tops of which figures have been placed. 133 of these pedestals remained, but only two of the figures; these were much mutilated, but they appeared to me to represent a dog.

Two magnificent flights of steps, of granite, and exceedingly well-fashioned, are the only remains of a grand temple. Below these steps are three small

square inclosures of granite, with small octagon pillars in the angles. Upon a stone in the centre of one of these inclosures, the King of Abyssinia is crowned, and always has been, from the days of Paganism.

Not long after our losing sight of the ruins of Axum, we overtook three travellers, who appeared to be soldiers; they were driving a cow before them. I saw this cow thrown down and tied; and I saw two pieces of flesh, larger and thicker than our ordinary beef steaks, cut out of the upper part of the buttock of the beast. The skin was left intire, as is now the practice of skilful surgeons in their operations, and was brought over the wound, and fastened to the corresponding piece of skin with small wooden pins or skewers; a cataplasm of clay was put over the whole, and the cow was again driven before the soldiers. I do not aver that living cows commonly furnish beef steaks to travellers in Abyssinia; but I do affirm that I saw this fact, and that I saw it with great pain.

We proceeded through an open country, partly sown with teff, but mostly overgrown with wild oats, and high grass; then over low hills. The jessamine became the common bush; and we saw fine trees beautifully covered with flowers and fruit. We descended into a plain, which we crossed between hedge rows of flowering shrubs; trees every where interspersed, and the vine with clusters of small black grapes, hanging in festoons, and joining tree to tree. We then travelled through defiles, between mountains covered with wood and bushes, and at length pitched our tent in a very deep ravine, at the western extremity of the town of Siré.

The province of Tigre is bounded on the east by the river Mareb, and on the west by the Tacazze.

It is about 200 miles in length from north to south, and about 120 in breadth from east to west.

The province of Siré reaches from Axum to the river Tacazze, and is about 25 miles in length, and the same in breadth. It is now dependant upon the government of Tigre.

The town of Siré is situated upon the brink of a steep narrow valley, through which lies the road, though it is almost impassable. The town is larger than that of Axum; the houses are of clay, with thatched conical roofs. Siré is famous for the manufacture of coarse cotton cloths.

On leaving Siré we passed over a vast plain. During the first day, we could discern no mountains in any direction. We saw no villages; yet the vicinity must be well inhabited; for there were many people in different parts of the plain; some busied in harvest, and others attending their cattle. On the second day, our road continued over the same plain; but it was become bleak and disagreeable; we observed no marks of culture, or of great population. On leaving it, we came in sight of the high mountains of Samen, over one of which, called Lamalmon, lay our road to Gondar.

In two hours after leaving the place where we had passed the night, we came to the brink of a prodigious valley, at the bottom of which ran the Tacazze, next to the Nile the largest river in Upper Abyssinia. The Tacazze rises in the province of Angot, now in possession of the Galla, in a plain champagne country, about two hundred miles south east of Gondar. It is shaded with lofty trees, adorned with fragrant bushes; its stream is limpid, and its water excellent. During the inundation, however, things wear a different face; the Tacazze carries in

its bed nearly one third of all the water that falls in Abyssinia; and I saw the mark the stream had reached the preceding year, which proved that eighteen feet depth of water had rolled within its bed.

We descended along a narrow path, which wound down the side of the mountain, and was shaded with trees of great beauty; and in about three miles we arrived at the ford of the Tacazze. The river here was full 200 yards broad, and about one deep; the water was very clear, and running swiftly; the bottom was firm and good. This was the dry season of the year, when most of the rivers of Abyssinia had ceased to run.

Beautiful as the Tacazze is, from the falling of the rains in March to the month of November, it is death to sleep on its banks, or in the country adjoining. The inhabitants live in villages on the tops of the neighbouring mountains, from whence they descend, and plunder travellers: not all the pains taken by the governors of Tigre have been able wholly to clear this passage from robbers and assassins. Numbers of crocodiles inhabit the Tacazze; and when the river is swelled so as to be passable only on rafts, or skins blown up with wind, these animals are so daring, that they frequently carry off the passengers. There are also many hippopotami; and, in the thickets which border the river, vast multitudes of lions and hyenas.

Having crossed the Tacazze, we had quitted the province of Siré, and entered that of Samen.

In an hour and a half we began to ascend the mountains which form the southern barrier of the vale of the Tacazze, on a narrow, steep, and winding path, with deep chasms, and perpendicular precipices; and in an hour we arrived at the top. We

saw many people feeding cattle on the plain, and we again opened a market for provisions. None but the young women appeared. They were taller, of a lighter colour, and more beautiful than those of Kella; but less gay, and more peremptory. They were hard in making bargains; but as far as possible from being reserved.

We pursued our journey through thick woods of small trees; the ground so overgrown with reeds, wild oats, and long grass, that it was difficult to find a path; and at night encamped at Addergey, in a plain scarcely a mile square, surrounded on three sides by wood, above which were bare and rugged mountains. To the westward, this little plain terminated in a tremendous precipice, at the bottom of which was a deep valley. Midway on one of the mountains, seemed to hang, rather than stand, a miserable village; and beyond the valley were five hills, with a village on the top of each.

The Shum, or Chief of these villages was desirous to detain me till he might be certain that he could rob me with impunity; and actually obliged me to remain here four days, and the last of them almost without food.

The first night I passed at Addergey, the hyenas devoured one of my best mules; and the roaring and grumbling of the lions in that part of the wood nearest my tent, so terrified the others that they were covered with sweat. On the second night, I shot a hyena; on the fourth, another, and another was killed with a pike; yet such was their determined coolness, that they stalked around our encampment with the familiarity of a dog, and fed on the bodies of their dead companions. We were still more incommoded by a large black ant, nearly an inch in



length, which, coming from under the ground, cut my carpets and the lining of my tent into shreds. Their bite was more painful than that of a scorpion, and caused a considerable degree of inflammation.

These circumstances, added to my extreme desire to reach Gondar, determined me to quit Addergey, without asking leave of the Shum. I proceeded down the side of the precipice, into the narrow valley, when I saw this Chief advancing towards us at the head of eight horsemen, and attended by fourteen or fifteen men on foot. I was too strong to fear such a party as this; I therefore stopped, and called out to the horsemen to do the same. I then desired the Shum to keep back his followers, at his peril, and advance with his son only, to inform me what his business was with me. He said that I had left Addergey without paying the duties, which amounted to two ounces of gold (about five pounds sterling.) I said that he had detained me at Addergey without food; and left me no other alternative than that of perishing by hunger, or by the teeth of the hyena; but that if a piece of red Surat cloth would content him, we would part friends. This at length he accepted, finding he could do no better, on condition that I would swear not to mention the affair to the Ras, while he, on his part, would swear not to pursue me any further. I acceded to these conditions, and added some cohob, incense, and beads, for the ladies of the Shum's family; and presented the son with two strings of beads to adorn his legs, for which he seemed wonderfully grateful.

The mountains of Waldubba lay north of us, at the distance of four or five miles, when we encamped in the evening. Waldubba, which signifies the valley of the hyena, is the retreat of monks and devotees of

both sexes, and of great men in disgrace. It is hot and unwholesome; violent fevers perpetually reign here; and the inhabitants are of the colour of a corpse.

After passing rivers, vallies, and mountains, during two days, on the third we ascended a mountain which may be called the base of Lamalmon, and pitched our tent on a small plain on its top. The mountains of Samen, of which Lamalmon makes a part, may be considered as the highest land of Abyssinia; snow has been seen upon their tops. This ridge extends from north to south about 80 miles, which is the length of the whole province; the breadth of the province, in a few places, is 30 miles; and in others, much less. It is in great part possessed by the Jews; and upon one of its highest and most inaccessible mountains, which is called the Jews rock, Gideon and Judith, their king and queen, still maintain the sovereignty they have possessed from very early times.

In half an hour after quitting our station on the plain, we began the ascent of Lamalmon, on a path scarcely two feet wide, which wound spirally up the mountain, always on the brink of a precipice. Torrents of water, in the rainy season, had divided this path in several places, and opened an abyss below, which my head would not suffer me to look upon. We were here obliged to unload our baggage, and carry it by little at a time, on our shoulders, round these chasms that intersected the road; and, as we advanced, the mountain became steeper, the path narrower, and the breaches more frequent. Scarcely were the mules, though unloaded, able to scramble up: yet this is the high road from Tigre to Gondar. After two hours of constant toil, we arrived at the plain of St. Michael, at the foot of a perpendicular

cliff, which terminates the western side of Lamalmon. At St. Michael, an account is taken of merchandize, and a present is due to the proprietor of the ground. I submitted every thing to the robber of the place; and if he were not satisfied, he seemed to be so.

The next day we left the plain of St. Michael. We found what remained of the road much less difficult than that we had passed; and in a quarter of an hour we arrived at the top of Lamalmon. As we approached the mountain, its summit had appeared to be a sharp point; I was therefore much surprised to find there a large plain, partly pasture, but more bearing grain. Streams issued from this plain in all directions, and springs capable of turning a mill boiled up out of the earth. I saw people ploughing, and busied in cutting down wheat; in one field green corn was in ear, and in the next it had just sprung out of the ground.

While my servants were sitting at dinner on the top of Lamalmon, a golden eagle appeared suddenly before them. He did not stoop rapidly from a height, but came flying slowly along the ground, and sat down close to the meat, within the ring the men had made around it. I saw him put his foot into the pan, in which was a large piece of meat; but finding it hot, and feeling the smart it occasioned, he withdrew his foot, and quitted the meat, which he had held. A leg and a shoulder of a goat were lying in a wooden platter; into these he trussed both his claws, and carried them off; at the same time locking wistfully at the large piece that remained in the hot water. He then returned slowly along the ground as he had come, till he sunk below the fall of a precipice, and was hidden from our

sight. The Mohammedans who drove the asses assured me that he would return. My servants thought he had already had more than his share of the dinner; I was desirous of a more intimate acquaintance with him; and having loaded my rifle gun with ball, I sat down by a platter of meat.

It was not many minutes before the eagle came; but whether his hunger was not so keen as at first, or whether he suspected something from my appearance, I know not; but he sat down at about ten yards from me, the pan of meat being between me and him. I shot him through the middle of his body with a ball, so that he lay down upon the grass, without a flutter. Upon laying hold of this monstrous bird, I was surprised to see my hands covered with a yellow powder. The large feathers on the shoulders and wings were apparently fine tubes, which, upon pressure, scattered this dust in as large quantities as a powder puff. On looking at the dust through a very strong magnifying power, I thought I discerned it to be in the form of feathers.

The golden eagle was eight feet four inches from wing to wing, and four feet seven inches from the point of his beak to the tip of his tail. He weighed about twenty-two pounds.

We passed several villages on the plain at the top of Lamalmon; and having crossed a river which separates this plain from that of Woggora, we entered the latter, which extends to Gondar. Here Woggora lay open before us to the south, and beyond it the mountains of Lasta and Belessen. The hills of Gondar were seen on the south west.

We proceeded along the plain of Woggora, which took us five days to traverse; though perhaps our time of actual travelling did not, altogether, exceed thirteen hours.



On the second day we saw twelve villages in an hour and a quarter. The country was become inconceivably populous, and vast herds of cattle, chiefly black, with large wide horns, and bosses on their backs, were feeding on every side. The third day the country was full of people, and the land was wholly sown with grain, principally wheat. Wood has here been extirpated to make room for corn, and the inhabitants labour under a great inconvenience in the scarcity of fuel. We found the price of provisions augment greatly as we approached the capital; the people were better dressed, and apparently better fed than those we had left behind; and throughout the day there was not a foot of land, except that on which we trod, that was not sown with grain.

On the fourth day our road lay among gently rising hills, which were all pasture ground. We saw more than twenty villages, one of which was Woggora, that gives its name to the district; and having travelled three hours and three quarters, I was at length gratified with the sight of Gondar. I distinctly saw the tower of the king's palace; but the houses were hidden by the multitude of trees growing about them, and the whole had the appearance of a thick black wood. I computed its distance from where I stood to be about ten miles. Beyond the city was the great lake Tzana, which terminated the horizon. On the fifth day we rested on the banks of the river Angrab, about half a mile from Gondar.

Woggora, the country through which we had passed, is understood to be dependent on Samen. It is one of the most fruitful provinces in Abyssinia, and the capital is the mart for its produce. It is infested with large ants, and swarms of rats and



mice; and to these plagues may be added that of a bad government, which destroys the advantages the inhabitants reap from climate and situation, and keeps them miserably poor.

We had been thirty days on our journey from Adowa to Gondar; on twenty-three of which we had been travelling, and on seven been stationary; but the whole number of hours passed in actual travelling was not more than eighty, that is, to the top of Lamalmon  $64\frac{3}{4}$ , and from thence to Gondar  $15\frac{1}{4}$ .

The whole of the journey from Masûah stands as follows:

From Masûah to Dixan. . . . . 27 hours.

Dixan to Adowa. . . . .  $25\frac{1}{2}$

Adowa to Gondar. . . . . 80

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132 $\frac{1}{2}$

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Perhaps not more than two miles can be allowed as the average rate of an hour's travelling, which will make the whole distance 265 miles. Six miles more than from London to Durham! What a crowd of ideas rush upon one's mind! How many steps must man have advanced from scaling rocks, fording rivers, pitching tents, and arming himself against his fellow man and the beasts of the forests; to sitting down in a mail coach, and being carried such a distance in thirty-eight hours, without any effort of his own! The distance from Masûah to the capital of Abyssinia leaves me nothing to boast as a traveller; yet when it is considered that this distance required forty-eight days to accomplish, without reckoning those I passed at Adowa, I hope I may claim a greater merit than those who have travelled in a mail coach from London to Durham.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF ABYSSINIA.

**B**EING now arrived at the capital of Abyssinia, I shall make my reader acquainted with some of the leading points of the history of this country, and its inhabitants.

The Shangalla are the native inhabitants of ancient Ethiopia. They are of a deep black, and woolly haired. They were formerly a very numerous people, divided into distinct tribes, each living in separate territories, each under the government of a chief of its own name, and each family of that name being under the jurisdiction of its own chief or head. They inhabit the Kolla, or low lands to the west and north of Abyssinia, and still occupy a great extent of ground.

During the fair season, the Shangalla live under the shade of trees, the lowest branches of which they cut on the upper side, near the stem, and then bend or break them down, planting the ends in the earth. These branches they cover with the skins of wild beasts. After this they cut away all superfluous branches on the inside, and so form a spacious pavilion, the trunk of the tree serving for the pole in the middle, and the large top overshadowing the whole in a very picturesque manner.

The Dobenah, the most powerful of all the Shangalla, and who have a sort of supremacy over the rest, live altogether upon the flesh of the elephant and rhinoceros. The nations that live nearer the

Tacazze, and the plains of Siré, feed upon buffaloes, lions, boars, deer, and serpents: and further west of the Tacazze, and the valley of Waldubba, they live upon the crocodile, hippopotamus, and fish, and upon locusts, which they boil first, and then keep dry in baskets, most curiously made with split branches of trees. The northern Shangalla have a variety of venison, and the eastern eat ostriches, lizards, &c. Whatever flesh composes the food of these people, it is provided during the fair season, and cut into thongs of the thickness of a man's thumb; it is then hung like ropes on the trees around their habitations, and the sun dries it to the consistence of leather. When used, it is beaten with a wooden mallet, then boiled, and then roasted on the embers; and when it has undergone all these operations, it is still sufficiently hard.

When the black soil that these people inhabit is dissolved into mire by the tropical rains, and the wooded pavilions are no longer tenable, the Shangalla retire with their respective kinds of dried meat, into caves dug in the steepest parts of the mountains, where they pass that inclement season in constant confinement, and in perfect security, each with his own family, and having no intercourse with the rest.

No sooner does the sun pass the zenith, in his way southward, than the rains cease. A very few days of intense heat then dries the ground so perfectly, that it opens into chasms; and the grass, struck at the root by the rays, droops, and becomes parched. To clear this away, the Shangalla set it on fire. The fire runs with incredible violence, following the dry grass, and passing under the trees, and among the branches, with such velocity, as not to hurt them,

but to occasion every leaf to fall. A proper distance is preserved between every habitation, and round their principal watering places, and the people again form their pavilions as before. Nothing can be more beautiful than these shady habitations; but they have this fatal effect, that they are discernible from the high grounds, and point out their inmates for destruction.

The country now cleared, the danger of the Shangalla begins. All the governors bordering upon their country, from the Bahanagash on the east, to the Nile on the west, are obliged to pay a certain number of slaves; and when a settlement of Shangalla is surprised, the men are all slaughtered; the women are many of them slain; many throw themselves down precipices, run mad, hang themselves, or starve, obstinately refusing food. The boys and girls under seventeen and eighteen years of age, the younger the better, are taken and educated by the king, and instructed in the Christian religion. They are the tallest, handsomest, and best inclined of any people in Abyssinia; they are the only servants who attend the king's person; and are servants of trust in all great families.

The Shangalla, as might naturally be expected, are mortal enemies of the Abyssinians. Where the belt of rich flat country is the broadest, the trees the thickest, and the pools the largest, there live the most powerful nations of the Shangalla; and these have often defeated the armies of Abyssinia, and laid waste Tigre and Siré, its most populous provinces.

The Shangalla go without clothing, except that the married, of both sexes, wear a slight covering about their waist. They have several wives, and

these are very prolific. As soon as it is born, they wash the infant in cold water, and then wrap it in a soft cloth made of the bark of trees, and hang it upon a branch, that the large ants or the serpents may not devour it. After a few days, the mother places it upon her back, in the same cloth, and throws her breast over her shoulder when it wants to suck. After bearing one or two children, her breast falls down nearly to her knees. Each family of these negroes attacks and defends by itself, and theirs is the spoil who take it; a mother, therefore, sensible of the disadvantage of a small number of children, importunes her husband to take a second wife, and woos her for him in nearly the same manner as I shall describe when speaking of the Galla.

The Shangalla have but one language, which is very guttural. They worship trees and serpents, and the moon and stars in certain positions. They have diviners who foretel unlucky events, and pretend to afflict their enemies with sickness at a distance.

The Shangalla have no bread. No grain or pulse will grow in the country. Before the month of May, the black earth is rent into great chasms, trodden into dust, and ventilated with hot winds, so as to be dead matter, incapable of vegetation. Upon the first sprinkling of rain, the chasms are filled up, and the whole country resembles dry garden mould, newly dug. As the sun advances, the rains increase; this is the season for sowing; and let us suppose grain to be sown. While this is swelling in the ground, there starts up an immense quantity of indigenous grass, which was sown last year, and which lay in the bosom of the earth, waiting its season to rise. Before the grain can appear, the



grass has shot up so thick, and so high, as to choak it. If it were possible to hoe or weed out the grass, a second crop would over-top the grain before its blade were an inch high; and could this second grass be cleared away, the fat black earth would by this time have become a perfect mire: the rain still increases, and the grain rots.

The Shangalla are all archers from their infancy. Their bows are thicker than the common proportion; they are about seven feet long, and very elastic. Their arrows are full four feet and a half long, with large, rudely-shaped heads of very bad iron. They have this remarkable custom, and it is a religious one, that they fix a ring or thong of the skin of every animal, from the lizard to the elephant, upon the bow that killed it. This gradually stiffens the bow, till, being covered with leathern rings, it can no longer be bent by its master. It is then hung up on a tree, and a new one is made in its place, which, in time, shares the same fate. The bow that was the favourite of the master is buried with him, in the expectation of its rising with his body to a second existence, when he shall no longer be subject to pain or death; but be endowed with a greater degree of strength, and a greater capacity for every human enjoyment.

There can be no doubt of the expedition of the Queen of Sheba to Jerusalem; as Pagan, Arab, Moor, and Abyssinian, vouch for it nearly in the terms of Scripture. The Abyssinians say that her name was Maqueda; that she was a Pagan when she left Azab, or Saba, her own country; but, being filled with admiration of the wisdom and magnificence of Solomon, she was converted to Judaism while at Jerusalem. They also say that she bore

that king a son, whom she called Menilek, and that he was the founder of the Abyssinian monarchy. The Abyssinians deduce three of their laws from the Queen of Saba. First, that the crown should be fixed in the family of Solomon for ever. Secondly, that it should not be worn by a woman. Lastly, that the males of the royal family should be sent prisoners to a high mountain, and continue there till their death, or till called to the succession. The Abyssinians believe that the descendants of Solomon and the Queen of Saba have reigned over them, with only two interruptions, and that they continue to reign over them to this day. They say that Menilek removed his court from Saba to Axum.

The Falasha, or Jews of Abyssinia, say that they came into this country with the Queen of Saba, when she returned from Jerusalem, and have retained their religion ever since. In fighting with the Abyssinian Christians, they have been driven from the low country, and compelled to take refuge on the rugged and almost inaccessible rocks in the high ridge of the mountains of Samen. One of these, formed by nature for a fortress, they chose for their metropolis. It has but one entrance, and that very difficult; being also defended by a multitude of inhabitants, who dwell on a large plain at the top, where there is sufficient space to plough and sow, and a large stream of water running through the whole.

A great overthrow which the Jews suffered about the year 1600, and in which their king and queen were slain, brought them to the brink of ruin; and since that time they have submitted to pay taxes, though they are allowed to enjoy their own government. They are supposed to amount to 100,000 effective men.

The Abyssinians were converted to Christianity in the year 333. This was effected with facility and moderation. No fanatic preachers, no heated saints or madmen, ambitious to make, or to be made martyrs, disturbed this great event. It was brought about by a young Greek, called Frumentius, who was shipwrecked on the coast of Abyssinia, carried to Axum, where the court then resided, and to whom the queen confided the education of the young king.

The first interruption in the line of Solomon happened about the year 960, when Judith, after murdering the princes on the rock Damo, seated herself upon the throne of Abyssinia. She reigned forty years, and transmitted the crown to five of her posterity, whose reigns were a continued scene of murder, violence, and oppression.

The descendants of Judith were succeeded by a noble family of Lasta, which was related to them. These were of the Christian religion; and the names of six of these sovereigns are preserved with every mark of esteem and veneration. The fourth of these, who was called Lalibala, lived at the end of the twelfth, or the beginning of the thirteenth century.

In the reign of this prince, persecution drove a number of hewers and builders of stone from Egypt into Abyssinia; and he employed them in cutting churches out of the solid rock, in Lasta, the native province of his family. These remain untouched to the present time, and will probably continue to the latest posterity. They contain large columns, and every species of ornament that would have been executed in buildings of detached stones, above ground.

Another undertaking of Lalibala was to intercept the waters which form the inundation of the Nile,

and to furnish Egypt. It is said that death, the ordinary enemy of stupendous works, put a stop to the enterprize of Lalibala: but I have been assured that they are visible to this day; that their purpose could not be mistaken, and that, had they been continued, their success was probable.

The last of the monarchs I have mentioned, and the grandson of Lalibala, performed a work not less extraordinary, though of a different kind. The infant king of the race of Solomon, who had escaped the massacre at Damo, had been conveyed into the powerful and loyal province of Shoa; where he and his descendants had been reigning during the period that the six Jewish and the six Lasta sovereigns had governed the rest of Abyssinia. Nacueta Laab, the present king, voluntarily resigned the regal dignity to Icon Amlak, the heir of the house of Solomon; and under the mediation of the Abuna, or Abyssinian patriarch, a treaty was concluded, consisting of the four following articles.

First, That Nacueta Laab should immediately resign the kingdom of Abyssinia to Icon Amlak.

Second, that a portion of lands in Lasta should be allotted to Nacueta Laab in perpetual sovereignty, free from homage, service, and taxes; that he and his heirs should be styled Kings of Lasta, and enjoy the ensigns of regal dignity; these were, that his two kettle-drums should be of silver, the points of the spears carried by his guard, and the globes on the top of the pole to which his colours were fastened, of the same metal, and that he should sit upon a gold stool or chair, in the form of that used by the King of Abyssinia.

In the third article the patriarch did not forget himself; for one third of the kingdom was absolutely



ceded to him, for the maintenance of his state, and the support of the clergy, churches, and convents.

By the fourth article it was ordained that no native Abyssinian should ever be chosen Abuna.

The first of these covenants was immediately performed; the second was faithfully observed nearly five hundred years; the grant to the Abuna has been in great measure resumed under different pretences; and the fourth article has been religiously kept.

Adel and Mara, two of the most powerful kingdoms on the south of Abyssinia, were the first to withdraw themselves from their obedience to its sovereign, and seldom paid their tribute, unless when the prince collected it at the head of a strong army. The provinces of Ifat, Fatigar, and Dawaro, which lay between these countries and Abyssinia, having, in weak reigns, been ceded to the Moors of Adel for sums of money, renounced, by degrees, the Christian religion, and embraced that of their new masters.

Better incitements to war than these could not be desired. During the rains, both Moors and Christians kept at home, and prepared for battle. When the rains ceased, they sallied forth for the purposes of destruction and devastation; and the first declaration, and the last practice, of war, on either side, was to burn the towns, destroy the crops, and murder the peaceable inhabitants, belonging to the opposite party. All this was done, however, with a due regard to the Christian religion. Amda Sion, one of the Kings of Abyssinia, marched into the territories of the Moors, celebrated the feast of St. John the Baptist; then razed the mosques of a town, destroyed the grain, burnt the villages, and put the people to the sword. He then marched to another



place, where he celebrated the feast of the Cross, and cut all the enemy to pieces, except a few old men and women, whom he graciously allowed to depart, cutting off only their lips and noses.

A Moor of Arar, called Maffudi, was not behind-hand with the Christian sovereign in zeal for his religion. Brave, capable of enduring the greatest hardships, and a rigid Mohammedan, he made a vow that he would always pass the season of Lent in some part of the Abyssinian dominions: not, however, with a view to his own humiliation, but that of the unfortunate people whom he visited; for having raised, at his own expence, a small band of veteran troops, he slew without mercy all who made resistance; and carried off whole villages of men, women, and children, of those who submitted quietly, and sold them for slaves. The Moor had a substantial reason for choosing Lent for the time of his depredations; for the Abyssinians are so strict in keeping their fasts, that they taste no animal food, butter, eggs, oil, or wine at those times; nor will they drink water, though ever so thirsty, till six o'clock in the evening. They are then content with bread, to which the richest of them add only honey; and this rigid abstinence renders them so weak that they are unable to bear fatigue or fighting.

When the pious Mohammedan had kept Lent in Abyssinia for nearly thirty years, beginning to burn the churches, and drive off the people and cattle on the first day, and making further progress as every succeeding one elapsed, the king of Abyssinia thought it time to make his soldiers eat in Lent; and he was so singularly fortunate as to find a monk, who took upon himself to fast a whole year, as an atonement for what the army might devour. Maf-

fudi was defeated by this expedient, and the Abyssinian prisoners and cattle were retaken. This happened about the end of the fifteenth century.

In the next reign Maffudi was slain in single combat by the monk, who having formerly fasted to expiate the transgressions of the army, now undertook to be its champion. On their return to the capital, the eyes of the whole nation were fixed upon the monk, who had delivered them from their constant and inveterate scourge, Maffudi. Every one pressed forward to throw flowers and green branches in his way; the women celebrating him with songs, placing garlands on his head, and holding up the young children to see him as he passed.

The barbarity of the Abyssinians was not without some tincture of the generosity of romance; for in this expedition the king advanced to a town in Adel, where there was a house belonging to the king of that country; and stuck his lance in the door, and left it, as a memorial that he had been there, and had had the place in his power. He then retired with his army, not suffering his soldiers to plunder.

The kingdom of Abyssinia was soon after overrun by the Mohammedans, and the king was hunted about the country like a wild beast, and fled from rock to rock, very often alone, and never more than slightly attended.

About the middle of the sixteenth century, a new enemy appeared in Abyssinia. These were the Galla, a powerful and numerous people who originated in the heart of Africa. They first entered the eastern frontiers of Abyssinia, and have continued to flow like a stream into this unhappy country, contributing more to reduce it than all its civil wars, and other external enemies, combined; having

gradually encircled it on the south, the east, and the north. The Galla were at first all infantry; and they said that the country they came from would not permit them to breed horses; but upon establishing themselves in the southern provinces of Abyssinia, and the small Mohammedan districts bordering upon them, they acquired a breed of horses, which they have multiplied so industriously, that they are become a nation of cavalry, and hold their infantry in very little esteem.

The Galla are of a brown complexion, with long black hair; some, indeed, who live in the low, hot country, are perfectly black. They are rather less than the middle size, and extremely light and agile. Though the principal food of these people was at first the milk and butter of their herds, they have learned of the Abyssinians to plough and sow the ground, and to make bread.

The Galla are separated into three divisions, each consisting of seven tribes; and this immense multitude girds Abyssinia round at all points from east to west, making inroads, and burning and murdering the property and people. They are so merciless as not to spare even women with child, in the hopes of destroying a male. Yet all these tribes, the most cruel that ever were let loose in any country, are governed by the strictest discipline at home, where the smallest broil among individuals receives immediate punishment.

Each of the three divisions of the Galla elects a king; and there is a kind of nobility from among whom only the king can be chosen. No noble can be elected till he be past forty years of age, or till he have slain with his own hand as many men as, added to his years, will make up forty,

The council of each tribe assembles under a tree called a Wanzey tree, which is held sacred by all the tribes. Here they deliberate upon public affairs, and determine what number can be spared for war, and what left behind, to govern, guard, and cultivate the territory. They afterwards proceed to the head-quarters of the king, who allots to each tribe its scene of rapine and murder; but limits them always to speedy returns, in case the body of the nation should have occasion for their services.

When a king is chosen, he is crowned with a garland of Wanzey; and a sceptre, or bludgeon, of that wood is put into his hand. His authority lasts seven years.

The Galla are reputed very good soldiers for a surprise, or a first attack, but they have not perseverance. They accomplish incredible marches; swim across rivers, holding by their horse's tails, an exercise to which both they and their horses are perfectly trained; do the utmost mischief possible in the shortest time; and rarely return by the same way they came.

The principal arms of the Galla are poles, sharpened at the end, and hardened in the fire; their shields are made of a bull's hide. The shrill and barbarous howl they make in battle may almost be accounted one of their weapons, as, together with the reports of their cruelty, it made such an impression on the Abyssinians, that formerly they rarely stood firm on the first onset of the Galla.

The women are said to be very fruitful. They return to their employments immediately after childbirth; and their employments are neither few nor small; for ploughing, sowing, and reaping, are among the number. The cattle tread out the corn, and the men take charge of the cattle.



Both men and women, but particularly the men, plait their hair with the guts of oxen, which they likewise wear twisted around their waist; and these, as they putrify, emit an intolerable stench. Both sexes copiously anoint their heads and bodies with butter or grease, which is continually raining from them. In these fashions they greatly resemble the Hottentots, to whom they must formerly have been nearer neighbours than they are at present. The only additional covering is a piece of goat skin worn as an apron, and another in the form of a woman's handkerchief, which is thrown over the shoulders.

It has been said that the Galla have no religion; but the Wanzey tree under which their kings are crowned is avowedly worshipped as a god in every tribe. The moon, particularly the new moon, some of the stars, and even certain stones, are also objects of their devotion. All of them believe that after death they shall live again, in the same body, and with the same friends as in the present life; but they are to be infinitely more perfect, to suffer neither sorrow, pain, nor trouble, and to die no more.

The Galla suffer no strangers to live among them. They sometimes marry Abyssinian women, but the issue of these marriages is incapable of all employment. Their form of marriage is as follows. The bridegroom standing before the parents of the bride, holds grass in his right hand, and the dung of a cow in his left. He then says, "May this never enter, nor this ever come out, if I do not what I promise:" that is, may the grass never enter the mouth of the cow, nor the dung be discharged from her, if he do not perform the matrimonial engagement. His engagements are, however, very simple; as he only swears to his bride that he will give her meat and drink while living, and bury her when dead.



Polygamy is allowed among the Galla; but it is the women who solicit the men to increase the number of their wives. A young woman having two children by her husband, intreats him to take another wife, and names to him the most beautiful girls of her acquaintance, especially those whom she thinks likely to have large families. After the husband has made his choice, she goes to the tent of the young woman, and sits behind it in a suppliant posture, till she have excited the attention of the family within. She then, with an audible voice, declares who she is, and who were her parents; says that her husband has all the qualifications necessary to make a woman happy; that she has only two children by him; and as her family is so small, she comes to solicit their daughter for her husband's wife, that their families may be joined together and be strong; and that her children, from their being few in number, may not fall before their enemies in the day of battle.

When the Galla woman has thus obtained a wife for her husband, she takes her home to him, and then retires, with her children, to the tent of the bride's family. There she is feasted; and the men, putting each their hands upon the heads of the children, take an oath to live and die with them as their own offspring. The husband remains at home with his bride during seven days; at the end of which time he gives a feast; when the first wife appears seated by her husband, and the second waits upon the company. The first wife always retains her precedence, and the younger one is treated by her as a grown-up daughter.

There does not exist a motive sufficiently powerful to induce a British matron to woo another wife for

her husband : but where fighting is the annual occupation, and each family fights by itself, conjugal affection gives way to maternal tenderness.

When a son begins to shave, or a daughter is marriageable, the father gives to either a few milch cows, according to his substance ; and these, with their increase, are the portion of the child ; the rest of his property descends at his death to his eldest son. When the father becomes old and unfit for war, he is obliged to surrender the whole of his effects to his eldest son, who is bound to give him aliment, and nothing more. When the eldest brother dies, leaving a widow young enough to bear children, the youngest brother is obliged to marry her ; but the children of the marriage are accounted as those of the eldest brother.

It is not a matter of small curiosity to know what is the food of these people, which is so portable as to enable them to traverse immense deserts, and fall unexpectedly on the towns and villages of Abyssinia. This is nothing more than coffee, roasted till it can be pulverized, and then mixed with butter to a consistency that will allow it to be made into balls. These they carry in a leathern bag ; and they say that one of these, about the size of a billiard ball, supports them in health and spirits during the fatigue of a whole day.

The language of the Galla is totally different from any in Abyssinia, and is the same throughout all the tribes, with very little variation of dialect.

This remarkable people have, by their continual inroads, wrested some of the finest provinces from Abyssinia ; and it is difficult to say whether they might not have conquered the whole, had not the small pox, to which they were strangers in their own

country, stopped their progress, and thinned their numbers more effectually than all the invention and opposition of man. If, however, the Abyssinians have suffered greatly from the continued irruptions of the Galla, it must be confessed that they have freed them from the hostilities of their ancient enemies, the Moors of Adel, whose king they have reduced to a state of absolute insignificance.

In the year 1680, Yasous, King of Abyssinia, began his reign by undertaking such an expedition as that country had never seen before. Every year of the Abyssinian annals furnishes instances of foreign invaders to be fought with, and domestic insurrections to be quelled; but this prince, attended by his nobles, sat down at the foot of the mountain Wechne, which had now been the prison of the royal family during forty years, and ordered all the princes to be brought before him.

During the last reign, these forlorn princes had been totally neglected; their revenue had been ill paid by the king, and embezzled by their keepers; and they had often been reduced to the danger of perishing by hunger and cold.

In the midst of the king's relations appeared his grandfather's brother, who, forty years before had been sent to the mountain, two of his uncles, with their families, and two of his brothers. The sight of so many noble relations, some advanced in years, some in the flower of their youth, and some yet children, all, however, in rags, and almost naked; made such an impression on the young king, that he burst into tears. To the aged he paid the reverence and respect due to parents; to those about his own age he behaved with a kind and liberal familiarity; while he bestowed on the young ones ea-

resses and commendations. His first care was to provide them all plentifully with apparel and every necessary: he dressed his brothers like himself, and his uncles still more richly, and divided a large sum of money among them all.

In the month of December, which is the pleasantest of the whole year, the sun being moderately hot, and the sky without a cloud, the court was encamped under the mountain, and the inferior sort of people were strewn along the grass. All were treated at the expence of the king, and passed the day and night in continued festival. "It is but right," said the king, "that I should pay for a pleasure so great that none of my predecessors ever dared to taste it." Of all that noble assembly, none seemed to enjoy it more sincerely. All pardons for criminals, solicited at this time, were granted.

Having spent thus a whole month at the foot of the mountain, the king called for the treasury book, in which the sum allowed for the maintenance of these prisoners was stated; and having provided for the full and punctual payment of it in future, he embraced them all, assuring them of his constant protection, and mounting his horse, he took their keeper along with him, leaving all the royal family at liberty.

This mark of confidence, more than all the rest, touched the hearts of that noble troop, who hastened, every man with his utmost speed, to their prison; regarding every moment of delay as a sort of ingratitude towards their kind and munificent benefactor. Their way was moistened with tears, flowing from sensible and thankful hearts; and the mountain resounded with prayers for the long life and prosperity of the king, and continuance of the crown to his



lineal descendants. It is remarkable that during the long reign of this sovereign, and throughout the wars in which he was constantly involved, no competitor ever appeared from the mountain in breach of the vow the princes had voluntarily made.

All the most powerful people in the kingdom had here an opportunity of seeing, at one view, each individual of the royal family who was capable of wearing the crown; and the generous conduct of the king was rewarded by their declaring, with one voice, that if they had been then assembled to elect a king, their choice could not have fallen on any other but himself.

The second interruption in the line of Solomon happened in the year 1709, when an Abyssinian nobleman, named Oustas, obtained the crown, on the death of the son of Yasous. Oustas was not a bad king, though not a legitimate one; but during his reign the revenues of the princes on the mountain had not been regularly paid, and the princes had again been reduced to the danger of perishing for want of the necessaries of life. In the year 1714, when Oustas drew near his end, it was proposed that his son, who was also confined on the mountain, should succeed him. The princes of the house of Solomon, expecting that nothing less than their utter extirpation would be thought sufficient to secure the new family on the throne, agreed among themselves to let down from the mountain fifty of their number, of the greatest hopes, and in the prime of life, to defend their right against a stranger, and secure the lives of those who remained. As soon as it was known that David, one of the royal family, was proclaimed king, they all returned of their own accord to the mountain, except Bacuffa, the younger bro-



ther of the new sovereign, who concealed himself among the Galla.

By degrees the Galla were introduced into the armies of Abyssinia. About the year 1760, the king passing with his army near the dominions which had been assigned to the family that had resigned the throne, the prince of Lasta presented himself before the king, in the habit of peace, with his kettle drums, and the ends of his guard's spears of silver. The king received him with great cordiality and kindness, would not allow him to prostrate himself upon the ground, and made him sit in his presence. He was an old man, of few words, but those inoffensive, lively, and pleasant. Magnificent presents were made on both sides; the prince took his leave, and the Abyssinian army was much pleased with this specimen of the good faith of their sovereigns.

It is remarkable that, during five centuries, the princes of this family had never abetted, in any way, the many rebellions of the Abyssinian subjects in their vicinity, nor had ever been molested or infringed upon by any of the Abyssinian kings. It is painful to relate that now, on his return home from the army, this prince fell in with a detachment of it, commanded by a Galla, who slew the respectable old man with his own hand, and then sacrificed his attendants.

The insolent Galla joined the army with the pride of a conqueror, beating the silver kettle drums he had taken, in triumph, and rode to the tent of the Ras, who commanded for the king. The Ras was so exasperated that he ordered his attendants to pull him off his horse. In a short time, the eldest son of the prince came to demand reparation for the murder of his father; when the head of the Galla

captain was presented to him, and the silver kettle drums, with the rest of the spoils, were restored.

The law of retaliation is the criminal law of this country; so that when any person is murdered, it does not belong to the king to punish the offence, but the judges deliver the offender to the nearest relation of the murdered man, who has the full power of putting him to death, selling him to slavery, or granting him a free pardon.

The next king of the Abyssinians was a prince more than seventy years of age, who had passed his life upon the mountain. He had a beautiful young wife given him, and was intreated to march against his rebellious subjects, who were aided by the Galla. Equally dead to love and ambition, he wept, hid himself, turned monk, and demanded to be sent back to Wechne. The Ras, who was now the King-maker, rid himself of the helpless, pusillanimous old man by poison, and proclaimed his son, Tecla Haimanout, in his stead.

Tecla Haimanout was fifteen years of age when he mounted the throne. He was a prince of a most graceful figure; tall, slender, of the whitest shade of Abyssinian colour, that is, not so dark as a Portuguese; for such are all the princes who are born upon the mountain. His forehead was handsome, his eyes large and black, his nose straight and rather large, his mouth small, his lips were thin, his teeth were white, his hair was long, dressed with great care, and in many different ways. His features would have been thought fine even in Europe. Though Tecla Haimanout had been only a few months from his native mountain when I arrived at his court, his manners were those of a prince who had sat on a throne from his infancy. He had an excellent understanding, and prudence beyond his years.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## RECEPTION AT GONDAR.

MY letters were for the King of Abyssinia, the Ras, and the brother of Janni; but these personages were all with the army. I was however received into the house of a friend of the latter at Gondar; and was visited with great ceremony the evening of my arrival by a nobleman of the court. He expressed great satisfaction at my being able to speak the language of the country; and, having been informed that I had treated the small pox successfully at Adowa, he requested my assistance for a son of the Ras, who was ill of that disorder.

The next morning I waited upon this nobleman, whom I found with large plates of bread, melted butter, and honey before him; and after breakfast we set out for the palace of Koscam, which belongs to the Iteghe or Queen, whose daughter, by a second husband, was the wife of the Ras, but not the mother of the sick son.

That wife of a king upon whose head her husband has placed a crown, is queen for life; and during her life there can be no other. She is regent during every minority, whether the infant king be her own son, or the son of the most distant branch of the royal family, and whatever number of minors succeed each other. This regent for life bears the title of Iteghe.

On coming within sight of the palace of Koscam, we uncovered our heads, and rode slowly. We alighted, and were shewn into a low room, from whence the nobleman proceeded to an audience with the queen. On his return, I found my attendance was dispensed with; the son of the Ras being much better, and enabled to eat raw beef, in consequence of having swallowed some characters written by a saint of Waldubba.

On the following day it was discovered that raw beef had not cured the son of the Ras, and I was again conducted to Koscam. On my arrival at the palace, I again found myself superseded by the saints, one of whom, who had neither eaten nor drank for twenty years, had undertaken to cure the patients, for there were several of them, by laying a picture of the Virgin Mary on their breasts. This time, however, I was called into the presence of the queen. I prostrated myself upon the ground, according to the custom of the country; as I ever was of opinion that true dignity could not suffer by a compliance with established ceremonies, and that little minds only could attach importance to a particular attitude of the person. The nobleman, my conductor; then said, addressing himself to me, "This is our gracious mistress, who always affords us assistance and protection; you may safely say before her whatever is in your heart." I afterwards learned that this gracious mistress had been guardian to more than one minor king; and that she, in conjunction with the Ras, had obtained the election of such, that they might govern in his name. After some conversation on the subject of the Christian religion, I was dismissed; and in the evening I learned that the son, and a grand-daughter, of the Ras, were dead.



All faith in the saints was now abandoned ; and I was requested to reside in the palace, and take charge of others of the royal family who were sick ; I therefore put on new cloaths made in the Gondar fashion, and having my hair cut round, curled, and perfumed, I entered the palace to all appearance an Abyssinian. Before I began to practise physic in the palace of the Queen of Abyssinia, I insisted upon one condition, which was that nothing with regard to regimen or management should be permitted without my orders. It had been the custom to shut the room so close as even to exclude the light, and to heat it by a fire and candles, while the patient lay under many coverings, and was supplied with hot liquors. I opened all the doors and windows, fuming the apartments with incense and myrrh, and washing them with warm water and vinegar, and I had the happiness to see all my patients recover but one. Among them was the infant son of the Ras, and Ozoro Esther, daughter of the Queen. I got for my fee a neat and convenient house within the inclosure of the palace of Koseam, and I saw the Queen every day at her levee.

The army now returned ; 30,000 men were encamped by a brook below the town, and the next day they entered Gondar in triumph. The Ras was at the head of the troops of Tigre. He was bare-headed ; a cloak of black velvet with silver fringe was thrown over his shoulder, and hung down his back. A boy at his right stirrup, carried a silver wand about five feet and a half long. The soldiers had their lances and firelocks ornamented with small shreds of scarlet cloth, one for every man each had slain, man to man. One officer, the door-keeper of the Ras, who from his childhood had followed him



in his wars, had the whole of his lance and javelin, horse and person, covered with these trophies of victory. They are, however, sometimes easily obtained; for after a defeat it costs but little to destroy the fugitives. It was said that the door-keeper had killed eleven men with his own hand after the last battle.

Next to these came the King, with a fillet of white muslin about three inches broad binding his forehead, tied with a large double knot behind, and the ends hanging about two feet down his back. When the army is in the field, this is a distinction used by the king. It is also worn by the governor of a province when he is first introduced into it, and, in the absence of the king it is the mark of supreme power, either direct, or delegated by him. Except on such occasions, no person covers his head in the presence of the king, or in sight of the house where he resides. About the king were the great officers of state; then followed such of the young nobility as had no command, and then the household troops.

One thing remarkable in this cavalcade was the head-dress of the governors of provinces. A broad fillet was bound upon the forehead, and tied at the back of the head, and in the middle of this was an ornament called a *kirn*, or horn, a conical piece of silver gilt, resembling in size and shape one of our common extinguishers. This is only worn at reviews, and parades after victories, and is doubtless the horn often mentioned in scripture, "The horn of the righteous shall be exalted," &c.

On the following day I was presented to the Ras, whom I found sitting on a sofa. His white hair, for, warrior as he was, he was seventy-four years of age, was dressed in many short curls. He appeared

thoughtful, but not displeased. His face was lean, his eyes quick and vivid; and they must have been bad physiognomists who did not discern his capacity by his countenance. I kissed the ground before him, and he stretched out his hand, and shook mine on my rising. He then said, gravely, "You are a man, I am told, who make it your business to wander in the fields in search of trees and herbs, and sit all night alone looking at the stars of heaven. Other countries are not like this, though this never was so bad as it is now. The wretches here are enemies to strangers, and their first thought would be how to murder you, if they had an opportunity, though they were to get nothing by it; therefore the king has appointed you one of the gentlemen of his bed-chamber, which is a post that leaves you at liberty to follow your own designs, and at the same time places your person in safety. Go then to the King, and kiss the ground on your appointment."

I then gave my present, which the Ras scarcely looked at, and went to the palace of the King. He was sitting in an alcove, and I prostrated myself before him. The royal historiographer, an old and familiar servant, presented me, saying, "I have brought you a servant from so distant a country, that if you ever let him escape, we shall not know where to find him." The King's mouth was covered, and he made no reply. Three young men, gentlemen of the bed-chamber, were standing on one side of the throne, and two on the other. I was placed above these latter, to complete their number, and one of them took his knife from his girdle, and put it in mine. While strangers remained in the room, the king spoke to us by an officer called *Kal Hatze*, the *Voice*, or *Word of the*

*King* ; when only his private attendants were left, he uncovered his mouth and face, and spoke himself, asking me many questions.

In possession of a place at the court of Abyssinia ; protected and favoured by the King and the Iteghe ; associating with the first nobility of both sexes ; I had leisure and opportunity to become acquainted with the country and its inhabitants, their laws and customs ; of all which I shall now proceed to give some account.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

PROVINCES, PALACES, HUNTING, AND ARMY  
OF ABYSSINIA.

THE mountains of Abyssinia divide the seasons by a line running along their summit ; so that while the eastern side, or that towards the Red Sea, is deluged with rain, the western side, or that towards Atbara, a country in possession of the Arabs, which lies between Abyssinia and Sennaar, enjoys continual sunshine and an active vegetation. And on the contrary, when Atbara is constantly covered with clouds and rain, the shepherd on the eastern side feeds his flocks on the most luxuriant herbage. The former of these seasons takes place during our winter ; the latter during our summer. These circumstances have entailed upon the shepherd a continual change of place ; yet so small is this inconvenience, so short the peregrination, that, from the rains on

the western side, to the sunshine on the eastern, a man may change his station in four hours.

The high country of Abyssinia is destitute of wood; the lower part of the mountains is sown with different sorts of grain; the upper part is covered with grass and verdure. The towns and villages are perched upon the pinnacles of hills and rocks.

On the south-east of Tigre is the province of Begemder, which is about 180 miles in length by 60 in breadth, comprehending the mountainous province of Lasta. It is well stocked with cattle of every kind, and extremely beautiful. The mountains are full of iron mines. Begemder reaches to the vicinity of the metropolis, and sends to it all sorts of provisions.

On the south-east of Begemder is Amhara, about 120 miles from east to west, and 40 from north to south. It is full of nobility, and the men are reckoned the handsomest and bravest in Abyssinia.

Shoa is south of Begemder. In this province was once the capital of Abyssinia, and it still contains its principal monastery, that of Debra Libanos. Its prince has been long independent of the Kings of Abyssinia; yet he has never failed to assist them with gold and troops beyond the quota due from the province before its independence. Shoa is full of the best and bravest horsemen in this country.

Gojam lies to the south of the lake Tzana. It is about 80 miles in length, and forty in breadth, a flat country, encircled by the Nile, and filled with large herds of cattle.

On the south of Gojam is Damot, which is about 40 miles long and 20 broad.

On the west of the mountains of Amid is the province of Agows.



Maitsha is the flat country on both sides of the Nile ; which, not draining soon after the rains, is in all places wet, and in many, marshy. It produces little corn ; but depends upon a plant called ensete, which furnishes the inhabitants with excellent and wholesome food throughout the year.

Dembea surrounds the lake Tzana, except on the south-west, where the Nile issues from the lake, and this province joins the district called Maitsha. It extends the furthest on the western side, and it is, together with Woggora, the granary of Abyssinia. They are both sown with wheat, but that of Dembea is the best ; it is called the king's food, and is appropriated to the use of his household.

West of Dembea is the mountainous province of Kuara. The governor has the singular privilege of beating his kettle drums, which are of silver, till he comes to the foot of the outer stairs of the king's palace at Gondar ; and no other governor of a province is permitted to beat his drums in any place where the king happens to be.

Narea has been reckoned the southernmost province of Abyssinia ; but it is, properly speaking, an independent state, governed by its native princes. What is to the west of Narea is unknown ; but the Galla have surrounded it on the east, north, and south, and have in a great measure cut off all communication between this country and Abyssinia. Narea is a mountainous country, interspersed with small, unwholesome, but very fertile vallies. The surrounding lands are flat, and many rivers which come from the southward, stagnate here for want of a sufficient descent, and spreading over the plain form very extensive marshes. The foot of the mountains bordering upon the marshes is thickly overgrown



with coffee trees. The Galla have settled in all the flat ground, to the very edge of the marshes, which was formerly occupied by the Nareans ; but though these have been driven out of the low country, it has been by multitudes, nation after nation, pouring in upon them, with a number of horses, to which they were perfect strangers. Confined now to their mountains, and surrounded by their woods and marshes, they despise all further attempts of the Galla, and drive them from their frontiers when they approach them.

The Nareans of the high country are fairer than the Neapolitans or the Sicilians ; but those who live on the borders of the marshes, are perfect blacks, and have the features and woolly hair of negroes.

The people of Narea have a small trade with Melinda on the Indian Ocean, and with Angola on the western, by means of the intermediate nations ; they are abundantly supplied with gold by the neighbouring Negro countries. Gold, which they sell by weight, is the medium of commerce within the country itself ; but coarse cotton cloths, stibium, beads, and incense, are the articles of their trade to the Atlantic. There is great abundance of grain in Narea.

The Nareans are exceedingly brave ; but it sometimes happens that they are taken in skirmishes by the Galla, and they are then sold at Gondar. The women are more esteemed as slaves than those of any other part of the world, and the men are reckoned active, faithful, and intelligent. Both are remarkable for a cheerful, kind disposition, and, if properly treated, they soon form an inviolable attachment to their masters.

The Nareans were converted to Christianity in the early part of the seventeenth century. Immediately

adjoining Narea on the south is another Christian state called Caffa. This country is still more mountainous than the other; coffee is its natural produce, and it may be presumed that the berry received its name from the place where it grew. The language of Narea and Caffa is peculiar to the country, and is not a dialect of that of any neighbouring nation.

From Buri, the residence of the governor of Dامت, to Narea, it is thirty days' journey with loaded asses, perhaps at the rate of eight or nine miles a day; in the whole, from 240 to 270 miles.

The western frontier of Abyssinia is called the Kolla. For the sake of commerce and communication, the Shangalla, the native inhabitants of the country, have been extirpated in two places, like gaps or chasms, in which are built towns and villages, and through which caravans pass between Abyssinia and Sennaar. A Mohammedan is always the deputy governor, who has to defend the Arabs in friendship with Abyssinia from their neighbours who belong to Sennaar. The inhabitants are fugitives from all nations; they are chiefly Mohammedans, bold and expert horsemen, using no other weapon than the broad sword, and with that attacking the elephant and rhinoceros. All the rest of this country is woody, impervious, and inaccessible, unless by an armed force, and even armies have perished here. The soil is a rich dark mould; a thick screen of watery clouds is interposed between it and the sun; and yet the thermometer rises to 100° in the shade. A luxuriant and odoriferous vegetation is the consequence of such a soil and such a climate.

Gondar, the capital of Abyssinia, is in lat. 12° 34' north, and lon. 37° 33' east. It was built about the year 1680. It is situated on the flat top of a consi-

derable hill, which is surrounded on every side by a deep valley. This valley has three outlets; one on the north, leading to Woggora; one on the north-west, leading to Sennaar; and a third on the south, which, afterwards dividing, encompasses the lake Tzana on the eastern and western sides; the former leading to the south eastern, the latter to the south western provinces. The Kahha, descending from a mountain on the north west of Gondar, runs through the valley and covers the south side of the city; the Angrab, falling from Woggora, surrounds it on the north-east: these rivers join about a quarter of a mile south of the city.

Gondar is perhaps three miles at its greatest length, and no where more than a mile broad. The houses are chiefly of clay; the roofs are in the form of cones, and covered with thatch. Every house in Gondar, and all the towns of Abyssinia, has two or three Wanzey trees planted round it; at the end of the rains, these are, in a single night, covered with a multitude of white blossoms; so that the town appears perfectly white. In time of peace, the inhabitants of Gondar may amount to about 10,000 families.

At the west end of the city is the King's palace, which was built by masons from India, and by such Abyssinians as had been instructed by the Jesuits. It was originally a square building, four stories high, and flanked with square towers. Great part of this structure is now in ruins, having been burnt at different times; but there is still ample lodging in the two lowest floors of it, and the audience chamber is above 120 feet long. This building is surrounded by a strong double wall 30 feet high, joined by a platform roof. Loop-holes, and conveniences for dis-

charging missile weapons, are disposed all round it; and the whole forms a gallery by which one may go round the walls and look into the street. The four sides of this wall, taken together, are more than an English mile and a half in length. The whole of the tower and wall is built with stone and lime.

Within the inclosure of the palace, are a number of small detached apartments, composed of the frail materials of the country, wood and clay, and thatched with straw; though within they are magnificently lined and furnished.

On the side of the river opposite to Gondar, is the town of the Mohammedans, containing about a thousand houses. These are an active and laborious people. Many of them have the care of the field equipage belonging to the king and the nobility; they pitch and strike the tents with surprising facility; load and conduct the mules and baggage; but are never suffered, nor would they choose, to fight.

The palace of Koscam is inclosed with a high strong wall, the gates of which are in good repair. Within this inclosure is a tower, or castle, three stories high, with a flat roof and battlements around it, which is the head quarters of the garrison. The outer precinct within the walls of the palace is occupied by soldiers, labourers, and out-door servants. Within this is an inner court, inclosed likewise by walls. In this are the apartments of the principal officers, priests, and servants; in this is also the church, which is reckoned the richest in Abyssinia. The altar is covered with plates of gold, the priests have large crosses of gold for their processions, and they have kettle drums of silver. The third, or inner court, is reserved for the queen's own apartments, and those of such of the noble women as are unmarried, and form her court.



The palace of Koscam is situated on the south side of Debra Tzai, or the Mountain of the Sun; above it, are houses of people of quality, chiefly relations of the queen; and above these the mountain rises regularly in the form of a cone, and is covered with herbage to the top.

It is the practice of the Kings of Abyssinia to make a public hunting match the first expedition of their reign. On these occasions, the king, attended by all the great officers of state, reviews his young nobility, who appear to the best advantage as to horses, arms, equipage, and servants. The scene of this hunting is the Kolla, which abounds with elephants, rhinoceroses, lions, leopards, panthers, buffaloes, wild boars, wild asses, and many varieties of the deer kind.

As soon as the game is forced out of the woods by the footmen and dogs, the young men, singly, or several together, according to the size of the animal, or their strength and ability in managing their horses, attack the beast with long pikes, or with two javelins in their hands. The king sits on horseback on a rising ground, surrounded by the graver nobility, who give him the names of those of the younger who are fortunate enough to distinguish themselves in his sight: the merit of others is known by report.

Each young man brings before the king's tent a part of the beast he has slain; the head and skin of a lion or leopard, the scalp or horns of a deer, the tail of an elephant or buffalo, or the horn of a rhinoceros. The head of a boar is brought upon the point of a lance, but is not touched, as being unclean. The elephant's teeth belong to the King; but they are seldom presented with the rest



of the spoils, as fire is necessary to loosen them, and time and force to take them out.

The King is always provided with a number of rings of ivory, which are worn as bracelets; these are distributed by him among the most deserving of the field, and kept as certificates of gallant behaviour. Nor is this distinction attended with honour alone; for the man who shall have received from the king, the queen regent, or the governor of a province, as many of these rings as shall cover his arm down to his wrist, appears before the twelve judges on a certain day, and laying down his arm, the King's cook breaks each ring with a kind of kitchen cleaver, and the judges give him a certificate which entitles him to the grant of a territory, the revenue of which must not exceed twenty ounces of gold, or fifty pounds sterling: nor is this grant ever refused or delayed.

The different species of game are differently rated. Man is in some countries thought to be an animal superior to a quadruped; in this, he ranks only with the noblest beasts of the forest. He who slays a Galla or a Shangalla has two rings; he who slays an elephant or a rhinoceros two; a lion or a buffalo two; he who slays a camelopardalis, though it be an inoffensive animal, has two, on account of the speed and skill in horsemanship necessary to overtake it. He who kills a leopard has one ring; he who kills two boars has one; and one is received for every four of the deer kind:

I confess I am not satisfied with the mode of classing my fellow creatures with elephants and lions. The Galla, being lawless invaders, I might perhaps be prevailed upon to consign them to the spears of the Abyssinian hunters; but then, upon the same

principle, I would give up the descendants of Solomon, and their people, to be hunted by the Shangalla, the original possessors of the country.

Great disputes arise about the killing of the animals ; and a council sits every evening before which every man may plead his cause, and receive immediate sentence. He who strikes the animal first, provided the lance remain in him in the same direction in which it entered, is understood to be the slayer, whatever number combat with him afterwards. To this there is one exception : if the beast, after receiving the wound, should lay hold of a horse or a man, so that it is evident he would prevail against him ; if for example, a buffalo toss a man with his horns, or an elephant take a horse with his trunk ; the man who shall then slay the beast, and prevent, or revenge the death of the man or horse so attacked, shall be accounted the slayer and receive the reward.

Such was the ancient employment of these councils. The form is still kept up ; but it often happens that the death or degradation of the first men in the kingdom is determined here, under the pretence of sitting to adjudge the prizes of the chase.

This hunting seldom lasts longer than a fortnight. The King, from ocular inspection, is presumed to be able to choose such of the young nobility as are fitted to take different commands in his army ; and it is from his judgment on this occasion that the priests foretel, on better grounds than sometimes prophets have to go upon, whether his reign will prove successful or unfortunate.

Hunting the Shangalla is generally the next expedition undertaken by a new king.

The rainy season commonly puts an end to the active part of war. The soldier, the husbandman,

and, above all, the women, dedicate this season to festivity and riot. The villages and towns are placed upon the mountains; the vallies that intervene are soon divided by large and rapid torrents; every hollow foot-path becomes a stream; the gullies between the hills become so miry as not to bear a horse; and the waters, deep and violent, are so apt to change their direction as not to suffer any one on foot to pass with safety. At this season, and this alone, people sleep in their houses in security. Their lances and shields are hung upon the sides of their halls, and their saddles and bridles are taken off their horses; for, at other times, the horses have always a small bit in their mouths, and are accustomed to eat and drink with this incumbrance. At this season the court, and the principal officers of the government, retire to the capital, and administer justice, make alliances, and prepare such funds and armaments as the exigencies of the state may require on the return of fair weather.

Three proclamations are made before the King goes out to war, which is generally about the 8th of November. The first is, "Buy your mules, get ready your provision, and pay your servants; for after such a day, they who seek me (that is the king) shall not find me." The second is some days or a week after, and is, "Cut down the kantuffa in the four quarters of the world; for I do not know where I am going." The third proclamation is, "I am encamped upon the Angrab (or the Kahha); he that does not join me there, I will chastise him for seven years."

All people of rank in Abyssinia are annoyed by the kantuffa. The soldier cuts his hair short, and throws over his shoulders a mantle of goat's, leopard's,

or lion's skin, of which the kantuffa cannot take hold; but when women or great men travel, it never fails to incommode them. If their cloak be fine muslin, the least motion against the kantuffa tears it to rags; if it be a thick soft cloth, which is generally the case, it buries its thorns so deep in it, that the rider must either dismount and appear naked, which is considered as a great disgrace, or much time must be spent before he can disengage himself from the thorns: and if he adopt the latter method, the kantuffa rarely fails, while he is thus employed, to lay hold of him by the hair, and bring on a more laborious and painful operation than the first.

The kantuffa grows in the form of a bush, with a multitude of small branches rising immediately from the ground, and is about seven or eight feet high. The thorns are thick and placed parallel and perpendicular alternately. The wild animals, both birds and beasts, especially the Guinea fowls, know how well this bush is qualified to protect them. In this shelter it would be in vain for the hunter to attempt to molest them, were it not for a hard-haired dog, or terrier, of the smallest size, which, being defended from the thorns by the roughness of his coat, brings them out of the cover alive, one by one, to his master.

A tent for divine service is always pitched in the Abyssinian camp. A custom less becoming the Christian religion is, that wherever an army encamps in Abyssinia, though but for an hour, a house is burnt, as a signal that an army has been there.

Bows and arrows were laid aside by the Abyssinians about the year 1670.

Forty-five kettle drums constantly precede the



king, and are beaten all the while he is on his march. The insignia by which he is distinguished in battle are a white horse, with small silver bells at his head, a shield of silver, and the fillet of white muslin. An officer goes before the king upon all occasions, to prevent the pressure of the crowd, and in marching he rides round him at a certain distance. Great respect was formerly shewn to this monarch by his subjects, even when they rebelled against his government: no king ever lost his life in battle till the coming of the Europeans into Abyssinia, when it seems that the murder and excommunication of the sovereign were both introduced.

An Abyssinian army is attended by 10,000 women; some bearing provisions, horns of liquor, or mills for grinding corn; some idle, half dead with fear, and crying. Fifty carry bouza for the king, and the same number for the Ras. The camp ovens are in the form of tea saucers, with the bottoms joined together, and are nearly three feet in diameter; they are made of a light beautiful earthen ware, which is at first red, but after being rubbed with butter it becomes a glossy black. A fire of charcoal is put under the lower part; the dough, in the form of a pancake, is put into the upper, and a cover, to fit, is placed over it.



## CHAPTER XXV.

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, ANIMALS, AND PLANTS,  
OF ABYSSINIA.

AN officer armed with a long whip takes his station at the palace of the King of Abyssinia, before the dawn of day, smacking his whip with an intolerable noise. This drives away the hyena and other wild beasts, and is also the signal of the king's rising, who sits in judgment every morning before breakfast, and breakfasts at eight o'clock. The king goes to church every day, his guards taking possession of all the avenues and doors through which he is to pass, as he then walks; but as walking alone would be too great a degradation for a King of Abyssinia, he is supported on each side by a proper officer. At church the king kisses the threshold and side posts of the door, then the steps before the altar, and then returns home. Sometimes there is service, sometimes no service; but the king takes no notice of the difference. He rides up stairs into the presence chamber on a mule, and dismounts on the carpet before the throne; and I have, by virtue of my office, seen the royal mule commit an offence against good manners on the Persian carpet.

The king is never seen to walk, or to set his foot upon the ground, out of his palace; and when he would dismount from the horse or mule on which he rides, a servant who attends him for that purpose

places a stool. When he rides out, or when he is at home if people are admitted, his head and forehead are wholly covered, and one of his hands is placed before his mouth, so that his eyes only are seen ; his feet are always covered.

In prostration, you first kneel, then place the palms of the hands upon the ground, then incline the head and body till the forehead touches the ground ; and if you expect an answer, you remain in that posture till you are bidden to rise by the king, or by his order.

The Kings of Abyssinia sit upon a large oblong square seat, like a small bedstead, covered with Persian carpets, damask, and cloth of gold, with steps leading up to it. This throne was anciently of gold, and it is still richly gilt. The portable throne was a gold stool, which is now exchanged for a very beautiful stool of ivory inlaid with gold. It is treason to sit upon any seat of the king's, and he that presumed to do it would be instantly hewn to pieces, if there were not some other proof of his being a madman.

The shape of the crown of Abyssinia is that of the hood which the priests wear when saying mass. It is composed of silver or gold, or both, mixed and lined with blue silk. It is made to cover a part of the forehead, both cheeks, and the hind part of the neck down to the shoulders.

It is the constant practice in Abyssinia to beset the king's doors and window with loud cries of "Do me justice, O my King!" Real occasions for such a demand are not wanting ; but in the rainy season, when the persons aggrieved would not choose to expose themselves to a deluge of water, a set of vagrants are provided and paid to cry and lament for imaginary injuries, to do honour to the king by

reminding him of his sovereign power, and to prevent him from being melancholy in consequence of being quiet.

The Kings of Abyssinia are above all laws. The land of their subjects is their property, and every inhabitant is born their slave: if he bear a higher rank, it is the gift of the king. The rewards of distinguished actions, or military service, are a gold chain, a silver bridle, or a saddle covered with silver plates.

In Abyssinia, when a criminal is condemned in capital cases, he is not remitted to prison, which would be thought cruel, but the sentence is executed immediately. Hanging is performed on a tree at the door of the king's palace: crucifixion, flaying, and tearing out the eyes, are punishments sometimes inflicted. The bodies of criminals executed for treason, murder, and violence, are seldom buried. The streets of Gondar are strewn with pieces of their carcases, which bring the hyenas in multitudes into the city as soon as it is dark.

There is no country in the world in which there are so many churches as in Abyssinia. Mountainous as the country is, and much as the views must hence be obstructed, it is seldom that fewer than five or six are in sight, and, if the ground be commanding, seldom less than five times that number. A church is always placed on the top of some beautiful round hill, and is surrounded with rows of fine trees; and this situation is always chosen near running water for the convenience of their ablutions and purifications, in which the Abyssinians are strict observers of the Levitical law.

All the churches are circular, with thatched roofs in the form of a cone. They are surrounded, at about eight feet distance from the edifice, by wooden

pillars, or trunks of trees ; and the roof resting upon these, it forms a pleasant colonnade around, for walking in hot weather or rain. The inside of the church is in several divisions, as prescribed by the law of Moses. The first is circular ; within this is a square ; that square is divided by a veil, or curtain ; and within the innermost division is a very small place, which, like the Holy of Holies, can only be entered by the priests. The churches are full of pictures painted on parchment ; for, from the first ages of Christianity, the Abyssinian scribes have been always painters ; though in a style much inferior to that of our sign painters in England. Here are St. George and the Dragon, St. Demetrius and a lion, St. Balaam and his ass, St. Sampson and his jaw bone, St. Pontius Pilate and his wife. I saw at Adowa a square miniature on the head-dress of the priest, representing Pharaoh plunging into the Red Sea, on a white horse, with his guns and pistols swimming on the surface of the water.

When you go to church, you put off your shoes before you enter the outer precinct ; but if you do not leave a servant with them, they will be stolen by the priests before you come out. You kiss the threshold and the two door-posts, on entering ; you go in and say what prayer you please, and your duty is over.

In the middle of the fifteenth century occurred the first instance that is known in Abyssinia of a trial for difference of opinion in matters of religion. An accusation was then brought against some families for worshipping the cow and the serpent ; and they were seized by the king's order, and brought before himself, sitting in judgment, with the principal of his clergy and officers of state, with whom he

associated some strangers, a custom which prevails to this day. The accused were capitally convicted and executed; and the king issued a proclamation declaring that every person who did not carry upon his right hand an amulet with these words, "I renounce the devil for Christ our Lord," should forfeit his personal estate, and be liable to corporeal punishment. This spirit of persecution, which was at first exercised upon seven persons only, flourished so well under the auspices of the high priest, that numbers, among whom were two of the king's sons-in-law, soon fell victims to it.

A convocation of Abyssinian clergy is never called in the reign of vigorous princes, but by the special order of the sovereign. From such a fanatic and tumultuous assembly, many of the most discreet members of the church purposely absent themselves. On the other hand, the monks who devote themselves to pass their lives in deep unwholesome vallies, hermits who starve on the points of naked rocks, or live in deserts exposed to the attacks of wild beasts; the whole tribe of false prophets and dreamers, who pretend to divine what shall happen in future by living in total ignorance of what is passing at present; people in constant habits of dirtiness, naked, or covered with hair; a collection of monsters scarcely to be imagined; compose an ecclesiastical assembly in Abyssinia, and lead an ignorant and furious populace, who worship them as saints.

Excommunication in Abyssinia expressly prohibits the person on whom it is pronounced from kindling a fire, and every one else is restricted from supplying him with fire or water. No one can speak, eat, or drink with him, enter his house, or suffer him to enter his own. He can neither buy, sell, nor



recover debts; and if he were slain by robbers, no enquiry would be made into the cause of his death, nor would his body be allowed to be buried.

In Tigre no language is known but the Geez, but the Amharic is the common language of the rest of Abyssinia. No book was ever yet written in any other than the Geez. There is an old law in this country, handed down by tradition only, that whoever should attempt to translate the Scriptures into any other language should have his throat cut like that of a sheep, his family should be sold to slavery, and his house razed to the ground. The Geez is a harsh inharmonious language, full of the letters d and t, on which an accent is put that resembles lisping.

Besides the Scriptures, the Abyssinians have the Constitutions of the Apostles, a book of Common Prayer, a collection from the works of the Greek Fathers, translations of the works of St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Cyril. To this catalogue of the works of other saints may be added the lives and miracles of their own, in four monstrous volumes in folio. They have a saint who wrestled with the devil in the form of a serpent nine miles long, threw him from a mountain, and killed him; another who converted the devil, made him turn monk, and live a holy life for forty years after his conversion, as a penance for having tempted our Saviour forty days upon the mountain; another who never ate or drank from the day of his birth, and made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem every morning, where he said mass at the holy sepulchre, and returned home every night in the shape of a stork. Another saint, being sick, was seized with a longing for partridges, and calling upon a brace to come to him, they flew upon his plate, ready roasted, and laid themselves

down to be devoured. These wonders are circumstantially told and believed, by unexceptionable persons, and were a grievous stumbling-block to the Jesuits, who could not establish the belief of their own miracles by any clearer evidence. There are other books of less size and consequence than these, such as the Virgin Mary's Musical Instrument, composed about the year 1440; and there is the book of Enoch, which contains the fabulous history of the giants descended from the sons of God and the daughters of men.

Every occurrence worthy of being handed down to posterity is recorded in the Abyssinian annals at the time it happens, and any very extraordinary achievement is written in letters of gold.

There is no form of marriage in Abyssinia, except a contract by mutual consent, which subsists only till it be dissolved by the dissent of either of the parties, and which may be renewed when both desire it. The king uses no other ceremony in his marriage than that of sending an officer to the house where the lady lives, who announces to her that it is the king's pleasure she should instantly remove to the palace. The lady dresses herself in the best manner, and obeys. If afterwards he make her Itegehe, he orders the judges to pronounce in his presence that the king has chosen his handmaid (naming her) for his queen; upon which the crown is placed on her head.

That my readers may not imagine living flesh is eaten by soldiers only, I shall give the detail of an Abyssinian banquet.

In the capital, where people are safe from surprise at all times; in the villages, when the vallies will not bear a horse, and men dare not venture far from

home lest they should be swept away by some temporary torrent ; in a word, when a man can say he is safe, and the spear and shield are hung up in the hall ; a number of people of the best fashion in the villages, courtiers in the palace, or citizens in the town, of both sexes, meet together to dine about twelve or one o'clock.

A long table, without any table-cloth, is set in the middle of a large room, and benches are placed on each side for those who are invited. Tables and benches were introduced by the Portuguese ; bulls' hides served the Abyssinians before, as they still do in the camp and in the country. Before every person, instead of a plate, are laid round cakes, about twice as large as a pancake, of sourish unleavened bread, made of the grain called teff ; and beneath these are four or five of ordinary bread ; the former are eaten by the company, the others serve to wipe their fingers, and are afterwards eaten by the servants. Piles of cakes are placed down the middle of the table, and answer the purpose of dishes.

A cow or bull, or more than one, if the company be numerous, is then brought to the door, and the feet are strongly tied ; all the flesh upon the buttocks is cut off in solid square pieces, without bones ; and the prodigious noise the wretched animal makes during this operation is the signal for the company to sit down to table. For my own part, I confess my weakness, I have always felt more strongly for the brute creation than for my own species, believing that man can, in general, either by force or ingenuity, make good his part against them, while they possess no power to prevent his eating them, if he choose it, or tormenting them if he do not. I therefore never could wholly accommodate my mind to

these Abyssinian feasts, though associating as I did with the great men of that country, I was sometimes obliged to be present at them. But to proceed.

When the guests are seated, a man and a woman alternately, two or three servants enter, each with a square piece of beef in his bare hands, which he lays down on one of the piles of cakes in the middle of the table. All the guests have knives in their hands; the men the large ones that they use in war, the women small clasped knives. The man, with his large knife, cuts off a thin piece, which would be thought a good beef steak in England, the motion of the fibres being yet perfectly distinct, and the flesh alive. The women take the steak, and cut it length-ways into strings about the thickness of one's little finger, and then cross-ways into square pieces, something smaller than dice; one of these is laid upon a piece of teff cake, well peppered and salted, and rolled up in it like a cartridge. No man in Abyssinia of any fashion feeds himself, or touches his own meat; he is, however, so condescending as to open his mouth to receive the cartridges the ladies on both sides have prepared for him; and he turns it first to one, and then to the other, till his appetite is satisfied. The fuller his mouth be of food, and the greater the noise he makes in chewing it, the more he distinguishes himself as a man of rank and good breeding. When he has done eating, he makes up two rolls, which he gives to both his fair neighbours at the same time, extending his arms to the right and left, till the meat finds the mouths of the ladies, which are ready opened to receive it. The man then drinks out of a large handsome horn, the ladies eat their own dinner, and then all drink together.



The poor animal is still standing at the door to be eaten, but he now falls to the share of the servants. When they can cut no more flesh from his bones, they begin upon the thighs; and, soon after, he bleeds to death, and the sinewy parts become so tough that the cannibals have some difficulty in tearing them to pieces with their teeth.

The Abyssinians, to a man, are fearful of the night. They are unwilling to travel, and still more to fight at that time, when they imagine that the world is in the possession of certain genii averse to intercourse with man, and vindictive if put out of their way by his interference. This is carried to so great a height that no man will venture to throw water out of a bason upon the ground, for fear the dignity of some elf or fairy should be violated in the small space that the water has to fall. The Moors, who, in the course of their trade, are accustomed to travel at all hours, sometimes from necessity, sometimes to avoid the heat, laugh at these notions of the Abyssinians, and not unfrequently profit by them. A verse of the Koran sewed up in leather, secures the Moors from all incorporeal enemies.

In Abyssinia there is scarcely a monk in any lonely monastery in the hot and unwholesome valley of Waldubba; not a hermit among the many in the mountains; not an old priest who has lived any time sequestered from society; that does not pretend to possess charms, offensive and defensive, and the power of looking into futurity. The arms and necks of the Moors are loaded with amulets against witchcraft, their women are believed to possess all the mischievous powers of fascination, and both sexes a hundred secrets of divination. The Jews are addicted to this in a still greater degree, if possible; and it is believed



by every Abyssinian that the hyenas which prowl about the city of Gondar in the night, are Jews from the neighbouring mountains, who assume that form to seek their prey. Even the Galla, a stranger nation, and hostile to the Abyssinians, agree with them in believing that witchcraft can occasion sickness and death, blast the harvests, and poison the waters, at a great distance. But can we wonder that these notions prevail throughout Africa, when learning and knowledge have not been able to banish them entirely from our own country?

The men of Abyssinia neither buy nor sell. It is infamy for a man to go to market; he cannot carry water or bake bread; yet he must wash all the garments of the family, and in this function the women cannot assist him.

As soon as a man dies, every woman to whom he stood in the relation of a father or a brother, a cousin german, or a lover, cuts the skin of both her temples, about the size of a sixpence, with the nail of her little finger, which is suffered to grow long for that purpose; and when the army is in the field, one of these wounds has scarcely time to heal, before another is to be made. When a man dies at home, the event is announced by the screams and lamentations of his family. The body is washed, fumigated with incense, and sewed up in one of the cloths which the deceased wore when alive. The relations then take it on their shoulders, and carry it in haste to the grave, where the priests recite over it a form of prayer appointed for the occasion.

As soon as the relations and friends can be assembled, they celebrate a feast in honour of the dead. If he were a man of consequence, an image representing him is dressed in rich garments, and placed

on his favourite mule, which is led through the town or village to the grave; all his other mules and horses, decked in gay apparel, making a part of the procession. Having redoubled their lamentations at the grave, the company returns to the house of the deceased, where a sufficient number of cattle is killed, and a sufficient quantity of honey beer and bouza provided, to satisfy and intoxicate the crowd which attends.

The dress of the Abyssinians is a cotton cloth twelve ells in length, and about twenty-seven inches breadth, with a blue and yellow stripe running along the bottom of it. The best cost about 6*s.* 6*d.* English, each, and are very beautiful and light. To one of these is added a pair of trowsers, reaching only to the middle of the thigh, and fastened round the waist with a girdle. The common people have the trowsers and girdle of coarse white cotton; the better sort have the trowsers of red Indian cotton, and the girdles of silk, or silk and cotton from the Levant. The coarser cloths are as thick as a blanket; the finest are equal to muslin.

There is no current coin in Abyssinia. Gold is paid by weight. It is in ingots, which, when they make presents of them to persons of distinction, are generally wrapped in silk paper. Fossil salt, cut into square solid bricks, about a foot in length, serves instead of silver currency: the value of one of these is about a shilling. The revenues are chiefly paid in kind, that is, cattle, sheep, and honey. The princes on the mountain have an annual allowance of 750 cloths, and 3,000 ounces of gold, or 30,000 dollars; but their revenue is often very ill paid. What luxuries the Abyssinians possess are obtained from Arabia by the barter of gold, myrrh, coffee, elephants' teeth, and a variety of other articles.

When teff is made into cakes it is suffered to ferment, and become rather acid ; it is of a spongy soft quality, and not a disagreeable taste. The white teff cakes are eaten by the principal people, the coarser by inferior people, and those nearly black are for the servants. Two of these cakes a day, and a cotton cloth a year, are the wages of a common servant.

Bouza is made of teff cakes well toasted, broken into small pieces, and put into a large jar. Warm water is then poured into it, and it is kept by the fire several days, where it continues in a state of fermentation. In Atbara, cakes of barley meal are used to make bouza, instead of teff; both are very bad liquors, but the worst is that made from barley.

Excellent strong wine is made at Dreedda, about thirty miles south west of Gondar.

Of the animals of Abyssinia, one of the most remarkable and most destructive is one of the smallest. It was one of the plagues of Egypt, and in our translation of the Scriptures it is called the fly, in Arabic it is called the zimb, and in the Ethiopic translation it is called, as it is said to be in the original Hebrew, the Tsaltsalya, or dog fly ; by this name it is still distinguished in Abyssinia.

The tsaltsalya is in size very little larger than the bee, but of a thicker proportion. The wings are of a pure gauze, without colour or spot, and are placed separate, like those of a fly. The head is large, the upper jaw sharp, and at the end is a strong pointed hair, about a quarter of an inch long. The lower jaw has two of these hairs, and these three, when joined together, make a resistance to the finger nearly equal to that of a strong hog's bristle. The fly is covered with brown hair or down ; its motion is more rapid

and sudden than that of a bee, and produces a jarring noise as well as a humming.

This plague appears when the tropical rains begin to fall; and as soon as its buzzing is heard, the cattle forsake their food, and run wildly about the plain, till they die, worn out with terror, fatigue and hunger. No remedy is known but to leave the fat black earth, and hasten to the sands, this enemy appearing in swarms during the rainy season, wherever that earth is found, and not daring to pursue the herds any further. When once attacked by this rapacious insect, their bodies, heads, and legs, are covered with large tumours, which break and putrify, to the certain destruction of the animal. To prevent their stock of cattle from being destroyed, the inhabitants of these countries have no other alternative than this emigration, which they must undertake, although a hostile band, capable of spoiling them of half their substance, stood in their way.

Man is affected by an animal still smaller than the zimb. The farenteit, or worm of Pharaoh, finds its way into every part of the body except the head, but it is most frequent in the legs and arms. On its first appearance, a small black head is visible, with a hooked beak of a whitish colour; its body is of a white silky texture, and looks like a small tendon. The natives of these countries seize it gently by the head, and wrap it round a thin piece of silk, or a small feather. They wind it upon the quill as far as it comes readily, and upon the smallest resistance they give over, for fear of breaking it. I have seen something more than five feet of this extraordinary animal wound out, with invincible patience, in the course of three weeks. No inflammation then remained, and in three days the place was well. If



the worm be broken, inflammation, suppuration, and, sometimes, mortification and death ensue.

The ibis of Egypt, which has disappeared in that country, is found in Abyssinia, where it is known by the name of Abou Hannes, Father John. Its height, as it stands, from the sole of the foot to the middle of the back is nineteen inches. Its beak is like that of the curlew, its head and neck are brown, its throat, breast, and part of the back are white; the large feathers of the wings, and those from the extremity of the tail to six inches up the back, are of a deep black. I found this bird in the low hot part of Abyssinia, which is full of pools of stagnant water.

There are no serpents in Upper Abyssinia; the *Boa constrictor* is found in the Lower.

Every tree and bush in Abyssinia carries flowers and fruit in the different stages of maturity. The west side of a tree is the first that blossoms, and its fruit proceeds to ripen till it falls to the ground. It is succeeded by the south side, which goes through the same process. From hence, it crosses the tree, and the north bears fruit. Lastly, comes the east, which produces flowers and fruit till the beginning of the rainy season. In the end of April, new leaves push off the old ones, without leaving the tree at any time bare, so that every tree in Abyssinia appears to be an evergreen. All the leaves are highly varnished, and of a tough, leather-like texture, that enables them to support the violent rains under which they are produced.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## LAKE TZANA. CATARACT OF THE NILE.

**T**HE lake of Tzana is by much the largest expanse of water known in Abyssinia, and there is every reason to believe that it anciently covered what is now the flat land in its vicinity. Its greatest length from north to south is forty-nine miles, and its greatest breadth from east to west is thirty-five. This is the grand reservoir of waters; rivers come down on every side of it, like radii drawn to a centre, and the Nile passes through it from west to east in a current which may be easily distinguished. The Abyssinians assert that there are forty-five inhabited islands on the lake Tzana; but they are not always to be believed, for dissimulation is, among all ranks of people, as natural as their breathing.

I made the circuit of this lake, passing along its eastern side, and round the southern end, and returning to Gondar by the western side and northern end, though my road was frequently at some distance from the water.

From Gondar I proceeded southwards, and in two hours I arrived at a river, which I passed on a solid bridge of four arches, a convenience very rare in Abyssinia. I then entered a very extensive plain, bounded on the east by mountains, and on the west by the lake, and in one hour more a road branched off for Wechne, the prison of the princes.

On the following day I reached the village of Emfras, which is about thirty miles from Gondar. It is situated on a steep hill, and the way to it is like the ascent of a ladder. The houses, which are nearly 300 in number, are placed half way up the hill, and front the west, commanding a view of the whole lake, and a part of the country on the opposite side. Above the houses are fields full of trees and bushes, which reach to the top of the hill.

From Emfras my road was still southward along the plain, and afterwards on the edge of the lake. In the course of the day I saw a great number of hippopotami, some swimming in the lake at a small distance, some rising from the high grass in the meadows, on which they had been feeding, and walking leisurely, till they plunged out of sight.

The next morning, having travelled two hours on a course to the westward of south, I found myself in the midst of twenty-five or thirty villages, stretching for the length of seven or eight miles. A little beyond these is a small village of Pagans, called Waito, who are held in such abhorrence by the Abyssinians, that to touch them, or any thing which belongs to them, separates a man from his family, obliges him to wash and purify, and renders him unclean till the evening.

The Waito have indeed a most abominable smell, and are very lean, wan, and ill-coloured. They speak a language radically different from any in Abyssinia, and are thought to be sorcerers, capable of bewitching with their eyes, and killing at a distance by their charms. I slept at the house of a most respectable Mohammedan merchant at the village of Dara; and as I was here only fourteen miles from the great cataract of the Nile, I could not forego so fine a chance of seeing it, though the armies of the king

and of his rebellious subjects, aided by the Galla, were in the field; and the expedition was attended with great danger from the unsettled state of the country.

My host sent with me his son, on a good horse, with a short gun, and a brace of pistols at his belt, and four servants, each armed in the same manner, with the addition of a sword hung over his shoulder, and mounted on four good mules, swifter and stronger than ordinary horses. I rode my own horse, and was attended by five of my own servants, resolute, active young fellows, well mounted, and armed with lances, in the fashion of their country.

We pursued our journey with diligence, leaving the lake behind us, and going to the east of south. The country was at first hilly and rocky; full of trees of the greatest beauty, with flowers of different forms and colours. I was truly sorry to pass them without examination; but it was not possible to attain more than one object, and even that was uncertain. After passing the plain, we arrived at Alata, a considerable village on the side of a green hill, whose Shum, or Chief, was the friend of my host at Dara.

All the people of the village surrounded us, paying their compliments to the young Mohammedan merchant, myself, and even our servants; and, as I saluted the Shum in Arabic, we speedily became acquainted. Having overshot the cataract, the noise of which we had long distinctly heard on our right, I resisted every intreaty to enter the house, and take some refreshment. How could I think of eating, when I had not seen the cataract of the Nile, and might be prevented from seeing it by parties of lawless depredators; whether ranking among my friends

or enemies! The Shum at length convinced me that if I could dine upon the cataract, the horses and mules required a different fare; and I consented to take a hasty meal while the animals were fed. Bread, honey, and butter, were plentifully served, and honey wine went round, till I rose and mounted my horse.

I was taken first to the bridge over the Nile, immediately below the village, which consists of one arch, about twenty-five feet in breadth; the extremities of the bridge were strongly let into, and rested on, the solid rock; the Nile here being confined between two rocks, and running, with great roaring and impetuosity, in a deep trough. We remounted the stream above half a mile before we came to the cataract, among trees and bushes of the same beautiful appearance with those we had seen near Dara.

The cataract was the most magnificent sight I ever beheld, though the fall perhaps was not more than forty feet high; but the river fell in one sheet of water, without any interval, above half an English mile in breadth; and with a force and noise truly terrible. The river preserved its natural clearness, and fell, as far as I could discern, into a deep bason in the solid rock, and in twenty different eddies to the very foot of the precipice; the stream seeming one part to run back with great fury upon the rock, and the other forward in its natural course, and the two raising a violent ebullition by chafing against each other. It was a sight that ages, added to the greatest length of human life, would not eradicate from my memory. My reflection was suspended; I was struck with a kind of stupor, an oblivion of every sublunary concern, which might almost have

been termed a temporary alienation of mind. I peremptorily refused to go back to Alata; and though we hastened forwards, it was past five o'clock when we arrived at Dara.

I now proceeded to join the king, who was encamped with his army in Maitsha; and after getting over a hill, the ascent only of which was three miles, we came to the passage, or ford of the Nile. The river was very deep, and perhaps fifty yards broader than at the cataract. I entered it on foot, giving my horse to one of my servants; and where I could not wade, I swam. Mules and horses did the same, some of them with riders on their backs; and some women who had joined us, swam over, holding by the horses tails.

From the passage, our route lay westward and to the south of the lake. We passed over a very flat country, which, by the constant rains that now fell, began to stand in large pools. The rich soil was trodden to the consistence of paste by the beasts that had carried the baggage, and every ford was spoiled. We saw dead mules, smoking houses, grass burnt in plots of a hundred acres; and not a living creature appeared on the once fruitful and well inhabited plains. An awful silence reigned around, interrupted only by thunder, which now came daily, and the rolling of torrents produced by showers on the hills, which ceased when these were over.

We now entered upon the broad plain of Maitsha, which lies to the south-west of the lake. The country here was in tillage, and had been covered with plentiful crops; but all had been cut down for the horses of the army, or trodden under their feet. We saw a number of straggling soldiers, in parties of three or four, who had been seeking among the



bushes and coverts on the banks of the river, for the miserable natives who had concealed themselves in such places ; and many of these parties had been so successful that each had three or four women, girls, and boys, whom they were dragging to slavery.

When I arrived at Karcagna, where the king was encamped, and which is not more than fifty miles from the sources of the Nile, I found the royal army on its return to Gondar. The King and the Ras, having received intelligence that the governors of Begember and Amhara had agreed to attack them in the rear, while they were engaged with Fasil the Galla governor of Damot, thought it not prudent to hazard a battle.

It was now the rainy season ; and the Nile was to be repassed ; and such was our haste, that we had to pass it towards the close of day, and at a ford never before attempted under such circumstances. An officer had passed in the morning, and his men were stationed in small huts like bee hives, which the soldiers make very speedily of the straw of the wild oats ; each straw being at least eight feet long, and nearly as thick as one's finger. This officer sent word to the king that his men had passed swimming, and with great difficulty.

The first who now forded the river was a young man, a relation of the king's. He walked in with great caution, marking a track for the king to pass ; and having gone about twice the length of his horse, he plunged out of his depth, and swam to the other side. The king followed immediately, and after him the Ras, upon his mule, with several of his friends swimming on each side of him, both on horses and without, in a manner truly wonderful. As soon as these were safely on shore, the king's

household troops, and I with them, advanced cautiously to the river on horseback, and swam happily over. The beautiful and delicate Ozoro, Esther wife of the Ras, passed over as he had done, on a mule, with many persons swimming on each side; and reached the opposite bank in safety, though almost dead with fear.

The ground now began to be broken on both sides of the passage, and many, mired in the mud of the landing place, fell back into the stream, and were drowned. It is impossible to describe the confusion which followed; night now approached, and though it increased the mischief, it in some measure concealed it. We returned to Gondar by the western side of the lake.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## FROM GONDAR TO THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

I HAD now but one object in Abyssinia, which was to see the source of the Nile. The first question Alexander asked at the temple of Jupiter Ammon was, "Where is the source of the Nile?" and my first and last demand in Abyssinia was to be protected during an expedition to the sources of this celebrated river. I had hoped to attain this object, on joining the army at Karcagna, but its retreat drew off my protectors, and rendered it impossible.

Having taken every measure that I thought might insure my safety, I left Gondar, and began my pilgrimage, proceeding towards the western side of the lake Tzana. I passed a country house belonging to the King, which is called Azazo. It is surrounded by orange trees, large and lofty, but planted without order. The house is going fast to ruin; as the sovereigns of this country have an aversion to houses erected by their predecessors.

Our road was constantly intersected by rivers, which have their sources in the mountains towards Woggora, from whence they enter the flat country, and are swallowed up in the lake. We encamped on the banks of one of these, after a day's journey of about fourteen miles.

On the second day we pursued the same course, south-west, and passed ten or twelve villages. About six miles to our left was Gorgora, a peninsula

which runs several miles into the lake, on which the Portuguese Jesuits built, with their own hands, a magnificent church and monastery, lined with cedar. We turned the north-west corner of the lake, to set our faces due south, towards the country of the Agows, in which are placed the sources of the Nile. We had passed this day through pleasant vallies, and over gently rising hills; but, upon the whole, we had ascended considerably since we left Gondar. Having travelled five hours and three quarters, which I computed at twelve miles, we slept at a collection of small villages near the lake.

On the third day we proceeded on the very brink of the lake; the land a deep, rich, black soil, laid out in large meadows, bearing very high grass. The bottom of the lake here was a clear fine sand. The fear of crocodiles and hippopotami could not prevail over the desire I felt to bathe in the lake Tzana: I therefore swam in it a few minutes, and though the sun was very warm, I found the water intensely cold. In four hours and three quarters from commencing the journey of the day, we came to Mescala Christos, a large village on the summit of a high hill. We intended to have remained here all night; but after mounting the hill with great fatigue and trouble, we found the village abandoned, on intelligence that Fasil, the rebellious governor of Damot, was not far distant.

This communication made us lay aside all thoughts of sleeping that night; and we descended the hill of Mescala Christos in great haste, though with much difficulty. We had here a distinct view of the Nile, where, after crossing the lake, it issues out on the eastern side, near Dara, the abode of my friend the Mohammedan merchant. We met multitudes

of peasants flying before the army of Fasil; one of whom told us that it was very possible he would pass us that night, in his way to Gondar.

About half past four o'clock in the morning of the fourth day, we fell in with an officer called the Fit Auraris, who always commands an advanced detachment of an Abyssinian army. He told me that Fasil had by this time pitched his tent at Bamba, within a mile of the place where we then were. He gave me a man, who, he said, would take care of us, and desired me not to dismiss him till I had seen his master.

We found Bamba a collection of villages, which were now filled with soldiers. We got a tolerable house, and the tent of Fasil was pitched a little below us. It was larger than the others, and had lights about it, and drums beating before it. After some time, I received a message to attend this commander. I repaired immediately to his tent, and found him sitting upon a cushion, with a lion's skin thrown over it, and another lion's skin stretched like a carpet before him. His upper garment was drawn tight over his shoulders, and a cotton cloth, something like a dirty towel, was wrapped about his head. His behaviour was such as shewed a design to provoke me; and to my request of being permitted to visit the source of the Nile, he answered rudely, "All Abyssinia won't carry you there, that I promise you." "If you are resolved to the contrary, it cannot," I replied, "but if all the rest of Abyssinia could not protect me there, your word alone could do it."

Fasil now put on a look of more complacency, and the next morning I met with a better reception: I was called into his tent to partake of a great breakfast of honey, butter, raw beef, and some stewed



dishes, which were very good. A man was combing and perfuming the hair of the Galla governor; his shoulders and breast were naked; and he had a new fine white cotton cloth thrown loosely about his waist, and covering his legs and feet. I had now brought my present, which consisted of four beautiful silk sashes, each five yards long, a splendid Persian pipe, and two Venetian bowls of blue cut glass. He exclaimed, "I have done nothing for this! It is a present for a king!" "It is a present for a friend," said I, "often of more consequence than a king to a stranger."

Fasil would now have made me sit down on the same cushion with himself, an honour which I declined. "Friend," said he, "I am heartily sorry you did not meet me at Buré (the residence of the governor of Damot), there I could have received you as I ought; but I am here tormented with a number of barbarous people, whom I am about to dismiss. I have nothing to return for the present you have given me, for I did not expect to meet a man like you in the fields. I have given you a good man, well known in this country to be my servant. He shall go with you to Geesh, where is the head of the Nile, and return you to Shalaka Welled Amlac, a friend of mine, who has the dangerous part of the country in his hands, and who will take you safe to Gondar. My wife is at present in his house. Fear nothing; I shall answer for your safety."

I then was hurried out of the tent, and had my upper garments taken from me by some of the officers of Fasil, who threw over me a loose piece of fine muslin in their place; and upon my coming back, Fasil took off the new cloth he himself wore, and put it about my shoulders with his own hand, his servants immediately putting another over him.

"Hear what I say to you," said Fasil. "You need not be alarmed at the wild people I am dismissing, and who are going part of your way. You see those seven people," (I never saw more thief-looking fellows in my life) "these are all leaders and chiefs of the Galla—savages, if you please—they are all your brethren; you may go through their country as if it were your own, without a man hurting you. You will soon be related to them all, for it is their custom that a stranger of distinction, like you, when he is their guest, should sleep with the daughter, sister, or other near relation of the principal man among them." I bowed, and remained silent. Fasil then addressed my seven brethren in the Galla tongue, which they answered by the wildest howl I ever heard, striking their breasts, as if assenting.

"The brethren of these people," continued Fasil, addressing himself to me, "were taken prisoners, and ill treated by order of the Ras. You nourished, clothed, protected them; and after such good care, these Galla are all your brethren; they will die for you, before they will see you hurt." I must own that if these people entertained any brotherly kindness for me, it was not visible in their countenances. "Besides this," continued Fasil, "you were kind and courteous to my servants while at Gondar, and said many favourable things of me before the king: now, before all these men, ask me any thing you have at heart, and, be it what it may, they know I cannot deny it you."

There is a freedom and dignity of manner in the uncultivated part of mankind which education cannot give, and may take away. All the Abyssinians are orators; but Fasil delivered this speech in a tone and manner superior to any thing I had ever witnessed.

My request was still to be protected to the head of the Nile, and afterwards on my return to Gondar. "This," said Fasil, "is no request; I have granted it already, and I owe it to the commands of the king, whose servant I am: however, since it is so much at your heart, go in peace; and if I am alive, and governor of Damot, unsettled as the country is, nothing disagreeable can befall you."

Fasil then rose; his seven Galla chiefs, three of his principal Abyssinian officers who were in the tent, and myself, did the same. We all stood in a circle, each raising the palm of our hands, while he and his Galla repeated some words together in their own language. "Now," said Fasil, "go in peace; you are a Galla; this a curse upon themselves and their children, their corn, grass, and cattle, if ever they lift their hand against you or yours, or do not defend you to the utmost against the attacks and designs of others." We all then went to the door of the tent, where stood a very handsome grey horse, ready bridled and saddled. "Take this horse," said Fasil, "as a present from me; it is the horse I rode upon yesterday. Do not mount it, but drive it before you, bridled and saddled as it is. No man of Maitsha will touch you when he sees that horse, and it is the men of Maitsha you have to fear, not your friends the Galla."

I took the most humble and respectful leave possible of Fasil, and also of my Galla brethren, inwardly praying that I might never see them again; then, turning to Fasil, according to the custom of the country to superiors, I asked his leave to mount on horseback before him, and was speedily out of sight.

Shalaka Woldo, the man of trust whom Fasil had

given me, was by birth an Agow, and about fifty-five years of age. He had served Fasil's father, who, prior to his son, had been governor of Damot, from his infancy. He had no covering on his head, except long, bushy, black hair, and no covering on his body and limbs, except a goat-skin tippet, and a pair of short trowsers of coarse cotton. The mule that should have carried him generally carried the cotton cloth that should have been thrown over his shoulders; and he marched by its side, bare-legged and bare-footed, sometimes with a long pipe in his hand, at others with a thick stick, with which he dealt about him liberally, to man, woman, and beast, upon the slightest provocation. He was exceedingly sagacious and cunning, and seemed to penetrate the meaning of our discourse, though he was totally ignorant of our language.

Steep and craggy hills lay between us and the lake, till we arrived at the rock of Dingleber, which shoots so far into it as only to leave a narrow pass that forms the road between the two. Through this pass must be conveyed all the provisions which come from the southern provinces to Gondar; therefore, when there is any revolt in these parts, it is always occupied, to reduce Gondar by famine. On the top of the rock is a village, which commands one of the finest prospects in Abyssinia. This is the southern boundary of the province of Dembea. Here I quitted the lake, and every step I took increased my distance from it; its shore inclining to the east of south, and my road a little to the west. After travelling all night, we arrived at the banks of the river Kelti, a quarter before six o'clock in the morning of the sixth day of our journey.

The Kelti is here a large river, and the banks being

of a soft, soapy quality, are exceedingly dangerous: it joins the Nile a little below. As we were preparing to pitch our tent, two Galla, belonging to a notorious robber called the Jumper, who was encamped with his party on the opposite side of the river, came with a message from their leader, desiring us to pass the river, and encamp under his protection. On this invitation we began to load our mules again, though we were excessively fatigued, and in want of sleep; when two whistles and a yell from Shalaka Woldo brought above fifty people to our assistance; the baggage was instantly passed, and to pitch my two tents was the work of a moment.

A bull of an enormous size was sent me by the Jumper, and I waited upon this chief in his tent. He was quite naked, except that a cloth was wrapped about his loins, and he was rubbing his arms and body with melted tallow, his hair having been abundantly anointed before. A man was finishing his head-dress by plaiting with his hair some of the small guts of an ox, and he had already about his neck, and hanging down to his stomach, two rounds of the same ornament. The Jumper was tall and lean, with a sharp face, a long nose, small eyes, and very large ears; he resembled much a lean, keen greyhound. Our conversation was neither long nor interesting. I made him a small present, which he took with great indifference, telling me, that if I meant it to pay for the bull, it was needless, for the bull cost him nothing, being given me by Fasil's order. I was overcome with the smell of blood and putrefaction, and quitted the Galla chief as soon as possible. The preceding day and night, that is, from Fasil's camp hither, I had travelled twenty-nine miles.



There are ninety-nine families in Maitsha, originally Galla, who were transplanted here as a barrier against their wild countrymen, and they themselves say, the devil forms the hundredth, for a family of men cannot be found to equal them. The houses of Maitsha are of a very singular construction. The first proprietor has a field, which he divides into four by two thorny hedges of the acacia tree. In one corner, by the intersection of the two hedges, he builds his low hut, and occupies what space he pleases. Three of his brothers, perhaps, occupy the three angles adjoining. Behind these, the children of each build their houses, inclosing the end of their father's house by another; and after they have raised as many dwellings as they choose, the whole is surrounded by a thick and almost impenetrable thorny hedge. All the family are under one roof, facing every point from which danger can approach them, and ready to assist each other. When a house is infected with the small pox, it is immediately set on fire, and the unfortunate people within, on endeavouring to escape, are pushed back into the flames with forks and lances, held in the hands of their friends and relations. Humanity shudders at the action; but here the plague is not so terrible as the small pox.

On the seventh day we pursued our journey southward from the encampment of the Jumper, and in four hours and a half we came to Roo, which is a level space shaded with trees, where the neighbouring people of Goutto, Agow, and Maitsha, hold a market for hides, honey, butter, and all kinds of cattle: gold is brought from the Shangalla by the Agows. All the markets in Abyssinia are held in such places as this, under the shade of trees. All are under the

protection of government, and no feuds or animosities must be revenged at the market ; coming and going, a man is at his own risk.

At Roo our road parted from that of the wild Galla who were returning home ; and here we found stationed to protect us, by Fasil's order, the brother of the Jumper, at the head of a number of men. This officer was called the Lamb ; and Woldo was very eloquent in praise of his humanity, assuring me, that when he made an inroad into any of the provinces of Abyssinia, he did not murder women, even though they happened to be with child.

The same inattention and indifference for new objects that prevailed in the Jumper, was also discoverable in his brother the Lamb, and in the other Galla his soldiers, yet the respect they shewed to Fasil's horse was remarkable. Each brought a handful of barley, and the Lamb himself had a long conversation with him, in which, as Woldo told me, he lamented the horse's ill fortune, and Fasil's cruelty, in having bestowed him upon a white man, who would neither feed him, nor suffer him to return to his own country.

I now turned my face to the eastward of south, in the direction of the fountains of the Nile, and took leave, as I hoped for ever, of my brethren, the Galla.

The country was finely shaded by acacia trees, which growing about fifteen or sixteen feet high, spread at the top, and touched each other, while their trunks were far asunder. The cattle were large and beautiful, and in some places the wild oats grew so high as to conceal both the horse and his rider. The soil was finely watered by small streams, and the moisture of these, aided by the action of a hot sun, pro-

duced trees and shrubs with flowers of every colour ; but all, except those of the rose and jessamine kinds, were destitute of odour.

After passing a considerable river called the Assar, which flows through this delightful country, and joins the Nile a little below, we had a view of the mountain of Geesh, the object of this perilous journey, for under it are the fountains of the Nile. We conjectured the distance to be about thirty miles. About two o'clock, I arrived for the third time at the bank of the Abyssinian Nile, and prepared to cross it at the ford of Goutto. The river here was 260 feet broad, and very rapid ; its depth about four feet in the middle of the stream, and two near the sides. The inhabitants of Goutto retain their ancient veneration for the Nile. They crowded around us at the ford, and protested against our riding across the stream on a horse or mule, or even walking through it with our shoes on ; and they threatened those who attempted to wash the dirt from their cloaks and trowsers in the river. They conducted me across, holding me on each side very carefully, on account of the holes, though I could not help thinking that my shoes would have rendered me more service with regard to the sharp pointed stones.

From my lodging at the village of Goutto, I heard the first cataract, and, as an hour and a half of daylight remained, I mounted Fasil's horse, and in half an hour's easy galloping over a plain hard country, in some places stony, in others covered with trees, I arrived at the cataract, conducted by the sound of the fall, without my guide being able to overtake me.

I found the cataract scarcely sixteen feet in height, and not more than sixty yards in breadth ;

the sheet of water interrupted in many places by dry rock ; in every shape less deserving of notice than the third cataract, the noble fall at Alata. It is said that the second cataract, that of Kerr, which I had left behind me at no great distance, is still smaller than that which I had now seen. I returned to Goutto without having seen a single person since I left it.

All the territory of Goutto is full of villages, in which the fathers, sons, and grandsons live together ; each degree in a separate house, but near, or touching each other, as in Maitsha ; so that every village consists of one family.

On the eighth day of our journey, after leaving Goutto, we descended into a large plain full of marshes, bounded on the west by the Nile. In this plain, the river makes above a hundred turns in the space of four miles, one of which advanced so abruptly into the plain that we were preparing to cross it, when it turned suddenly to the right, and ran in a contrary direction. The river here was not more than twenty feet broad, and one foot deep.

On quitting the plain, Woldo, my man of trust, declared himself so ill, that he believed he should die at the next village. We proceeded, however, notwithstanding the desperate state of Woldo's health, which I doubted not had some cause that would be unfolded in due time, and entered the valley of Abola. This valley is inclosed by mountains on the east and west, which increase in height and become more rugged and woody as we advance towards the south. On the tops of these are most delightful plains, which afford pasture.

All the villages we had passed since we crossed the Nile at Goutto, were surrounded by large thick

plantations of the ensete, or Jerusalem artichoke. This plant is said to have been brought by the Galla from Narea; and its root supplies Maitsha, the Agows, and Damot, with food.

We slept at a small village in the plain of Abola, and left it on the ninth morning of our journey, without having seen any of its inhabitants, who had abandoned their houses at the sight of Fasil's horse. In two hours we arrived at the top of a mountain, from whence we had a view of Sacala, a plain full of small low villages; in half an hour we descended into the plain, and in half an hour more we halted on a small eminence, on which the market of Sacala is held every Saturday. Horned cattle, many of them of the greatest beauty, large asses, honey, butter, ensete for food, and mats manufactured from the leaf, painted with different colours, like Mosaic work, are here exposed for sale in great abundance; and still greater quantities of honey and butter are carried from this neighbourhood to Gondar.

From the plain of Sacala we ascended a mountain, the last and worst of our journey. It was steep and rugged, full of holes and large stones, covered with thick wood, which frequently concealed from us the edge of the precipice on which we stood; and furnished with thorns and brambles, particularly with that most execrable of all thorns, the kantuffa. In half an hour we reached the summit, and saw, immediately below us, the Nile—a brook, with scarcely water enough to turn a mill! The mountain of Geesh, at the foot of which it rises, was about a mile and a half distant.

While I was silently contemplating the prospect I had so ardently wished to see, an alarm was spread that we had lost Woldo, our guide. He was found



at the distance of a few hundred yards behind, but in so weak a state, that he declared it was not possible for him to proceed any further. I felt his pulse, and said that his hand informed me he was perfectly well, and that he was playing some trick which would turn out to his own disadvantage. On this he grew better; but said he must rest a few minutes, as it required strength to mount another great hill which lay between us and Geesh. "Lying is to no purpose," said I, "I know where Geesh is, as well as you, and I know there are no more hills to pass; therefore if you choose to stay behind, you may; and to-morrow I shall send word of it to Buré. I then walked down to the ford of the Nile, and Woldo followed with my servants, and walked as well as they. The Nile here was not four yards over, and not above four inches deep.

I had worn during this journey a very handsome silk sash, which wrapped five times round my waist, and Woldo had regarded it with great attention, and had made enquiries respecting its value; he now desired to speak with me alone. "I know by your face," said I, "that you are going to tell me a lie; and I tell you solemnly that if you have any favour to ask, you will not obtain it by that means; by truth and good behaviour you may. I knew you were no more sick than I am." "Sir," said Woldo, "you are right; I was not sick. But I cannot go with you to Geesh; for when my master, Fasil, defeated the Agows at the battle of Banja, I was with him, and slew some of the men of this village; and you know that if I fall into the hands of these people, my blood must pay for their blood."

"Did not I say," replied I, "that it was a lye you were going to tell me? Many men were slain at the

battle of Banja; somebody must, and you may, have slain them; but do you think I can believe that Fasil could rule the Agows as he does, and not be able to send a servant among them in safety, at the distance of twenty miles from his own residence? No, tell me the truth at once, and try how far that will succeed."

At length Woldo confessed his great desire to have my sash, and his fears that when I had once seen the fountains of the Nile, and found that they were no more than other fountains, I should not give it him. I instantly took off my sash, and, giving it to Woldo, I said, "Here, take the sash; truth has procured it for you, and truth and good behaviour may procure still more; but, if in the course of this journey, you play off another piece of deceit, though ever so trifling, I will bring such vengeance upon your head that you shall not be able to find a place to hide it in. Now," continued I, "shew me the source of the Nile."

"Look at that hillock of green turf, in the middle of that watery spot," said my man of trust, a little terrified by my threat; "in that are the two fountains of the Nile, and Geesh is on the face of the rock where those green trees are. If you go to the fountains, pull off your shoes; for these people worship the river as you do."

I waited for no more; but taking off my shoes, I ran down to the fountain, and drank repeated draughts of the precious beverage.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## THE NILE.

**G**EESH is not more than 600 yards from the sources of the Nile, and is situated on the face of a cliff which rises abruptly from a plain, and fronts the south : the flat country continues about seventy miles to the southward, where it meets the Nile again after it has passed through the lake Tzana, and encircled the provinces of Gojam and Damot. The cliff of Geesh seems purposely fashioned into a number of shelves or stages, which occupy about two thirds of its height, leaving an equal space above and below ; on each stage is a cluster of houses, seldom exceeding eight or ten in number ; and these, being half hidden by trees, have a very picturesque appearance from the plain. The only communication with the houses, either from above or below, is by narrow winding paths, scarcely discernible for thorns and bushes. Lofty trees, most of them of the thorny kind, and bearing beautiful flowers, as all the thorns of Abyssinia do, tower high above the edge of the cliff.

From the top of the cliff, the ground slopes with an easy descent to the north, and ends in a small triangular marsh, in which are the sources of the Nile. On the north of the marsh, the ground rises into a round hill, on which stands the church of St. Michael Geesh. On the west of the marsh rises the mountain of Geesh, a beautiful detached mountain

of moderate height, of a pyramidal form, and covered with clover, grass, and flowers. On the east of the marsh the ground descends gently to the village of Sacala, which is six miles distant.

In the middle of the marsh arises a hillock of a circular form, about three feet high and twelve in diameter; and in the centre of this is a hole about three feet in diameter and seven feet in depth, obviously made, or enlarged, by the hand of man, and filled nearly to the brim with clear and limpid water, without any ebullition on its surface. At the distance of ten and twenty feet from this, are two other fountains, standing, like the former, in altars of firm sod, but smaller and lower.

Geesh is situated in lat.  $10^{\circ} 59'$  north, and in lon.  $36^{\circ} 55'$  east. At five o'clock in the morning, the thermometer stood at  $44^{\circ}$ ; at noon, at  $96^{\circ}$ ; and at sunset, at  $46^{\circ}$ . In this country it is always disagreeably cold when the thermometer is below  $63^{\circ}$ .

It may not be unacceptable to trace the course of the Nile, so far as it is known. This river runs in a northerly direction from its source till it has advanced to the lake Tzana, which it crosses from west to east for about twenty one miles, preserving the colour of its stream distinct from that of the lake, and issuing out of it in the territory of Dara. There is a ford, though a very deep and dangerous one, as soon as it has left the lake. Having passed the cataract of Alata, its course becomes south-east, and it washes the western part of Begemder and Amhara; it then turns successively south and west, inclosing nearly all the province of Gojam, and leaving it always on the right. In forming this circle, it at length turns almost due north, and approaches so near its source as to be only about sixty-two miles to the southward

of it. The river is here very deep and rapid, and only fordable at certain seasons of the year. The Galla pass it on goat skins, blown up like bladders; or on small rafts; or by twisting a horse's tail in their hands and swimming. Crocodiles abound in this part of the Nile.

To the south of Abyssinia is a mountainous country, inhabited by a nation of perfect Blacks called Guba. Here the Nile is said to have forced its way through a gap in this barrier, and to fall down about 280 feet; and this fall is succeeded by two others, very considerable, but not so high as the former, in the same ridge of mountains. These are called the mountains of Fazuclo. They are said to be inhabited by many powerful tribes of Blacks, and a large quantity of gold is brought from thence. This is the fine gold of Sennaar called tibbar, which is washed down by the rains, and found in small pellets among roots, tufts of grass, or hollows in the earth.

The Nile now runs by Sennaar, in a direction nearly north, and is the only ornament of that flat, though cultivated country. From Sennaar, it passes many large towns inhabited by Arabs; then passes Gerri, and runs north-east to take in the Tacazze, passing, in its way, a large and populous town called Chendi. The Nile, now takes its course due north till it arrives at Korti, the first town in the kingdom of Dongola; from whence it bends to the west as far as Moscho, a considerable town, and a welcome place of refreshment to the weary traveller, when the caravans were suffered to pass this way. From Moscho, the Nile turns gradually towards the east, till it recovers its former northerly direction. In lat. 22°. 15' it meets with a chain of mountains; and, throwing itself down a pass, it forms the seventh



cataract, which is called Jan Adel. It then passes Ibrim and Deir ; forms the eighth cataract, above Assouan ; and takes its course through Egypt, to the Mediterranean Sea.

But, though I have generally spoken of the Nile of Abyssinia, as being the Nile of Egypt, the source of which the ancients were so anxious to discover ; the reader may have observed I am not ignorant that there is another Nile, which remains to be explored.

I have hitherto banished conjecture from the history of my travels, desirous that it should contain only facts ; but here the facts already known can but serve for the foundation of conjecture.

It is said that a chain of mountains crosses Africa ; from Assentee, on the west, to Abyssinia on the east, and that these are called the Mountains of the Moon.

It is said, by a most accurate and judicious traveller, Mr. Jackson, on the authority of respectable African merchants, that from one of these mountains, belonging to a western branch, two large rivers take their course ; one from the eastern, the other from the western, side of the mountain ; that, at first, they both flow in a northerly direction ; and that afterwards the river on the western side runs towards the west, and is called the Senegal ; while that on the eastern runs towards the east, and is called by the African Arabs the Bahar el Abeed, or the Nile el Abeed ; that is, the River, or the Nile, of the Blacks, or Negroes.

A large river, flowing towards the east, has been traced from Bammakoo to Silla, in Bambarra ; it is known to proceed to Jinnie, and to pass about twelve miles to the south of Timbuctoo ; it is said then to pursue its course eastward for about 350 miles, and

to empty itself into an immense lake called the Sea of Soudan. Here it is lost.

The next that we hear of, a large river taking a similar, but rather more northerly direction, is in the country called Dar Kulla, to the south west of Dar Fûr.

We are afterwards told of a Bahar el Abiad, or White River, broader and deeper than the Abyssinian Nile, which, coming from the south west, passes about three day's journey to the west of Sennaar, and joins the Abyssinian Nile at a village called Hojila, about nine miles south west of Halfaia.

It would ill become me to pretend to decide where the learned entertain different opinions. But is it too much to suppose that the Nile of the Negroes has been called by the various names of the Niger, the Joliba, and the Bahar el Abiad? that it rises in a branch of the Mountains of the Moon, south west of Bammakoo? that it passes by that town, Sego, Silla, Jinnie, and near Timbuctoo? that it runs through the Sea of Soudan, as the eastern Nile through the Lake Tzana? and that, issuing from thence, it pursues its course through countries unknown to us, till it appears in Dar Kulla and the kingdom of Sennaar? The word Niger has the same signification as the true distinction, Abeed; Joliba may be a local appellation, like the Avon Mawr, or Great River, by which name the Maw is known in Wales; and Abiad may be a mistaken orthography for Abeed.

It is said that the Nile of the Negroes overflows like the Nile of Egypt. It is also said that the African Arabs know but two Niles; the larger, which they call the Nile el Abeed, or the Nile of the Blacks; and the smaller, which they call the Nile el Massar,

or the Nile of Egypt : thus ascribing to the Nile of Geesh the long established honour of being the river of Egypt. I apprehend, however, that it only merits the title of Nile el Habbesh, and that both, when united, form the river of Egypt. But I have heard of persons who deny it even this honour, and thus contradict the universal voice of every country through which it flows, from Geesh to Rosetta.

If future discoveries should ascertain that the Bahar el Abeed and the Bahar el Abiad are distinct rivers, I cannot entertain any doubt that they will prove there is a communication between the two, by means of some intermediate waters ; for besides that the enlightened traveller above mentioned informs us there is but one opinion on this subject among intelligent persons in Africa, he has given the particulars of a voyage actually performed by a party of Negroes, from Jinnie to Cairo.

This voyage appears to me more extraordinary than any which has been accomplished since the discovery of America. Its authenticity rests upon the credit of a most respectable Mohammedan merchant, now living, whose name, if the author thought himself at liberty to mention it, would add considerable weight to his evidence ; and the author himself has done more, and is still capable of doing more, towards laying open the interior of Africa, than those who have been sent out expressly for that purpose.

By the activity of Woldo, I found myself settled in the house of the Shum of Geesh, and had four or five other houses for my baggage and servants. We were scarcely seated, when a servant arrived from Fasil with a fine milk white cow, two sheep, two goats, fifty loaves of excellent wheaten bread, six jars of honey beer, and two horns of strong spirits.

We passed a cheerful evening, Woldo alone betraying some degree of apprehension. At length he besought me not to mention the affair of the sash to Fasil's servant. I assured him that if he continued to act as he now did, I was much more likely to give him another sash, than to complain of the means he used to obtain this. He then joined in the general mirth, and ever after deserved more and more commendation.

I displayed my lesser articles for barter to the Shum of Geesh, and told him that I should pay for sheep and oxen with gold. He was so struck with this unexpected generosity, that he insisted upon our taking three of his daughters to be our housekeepers. The eldest, who took the direction of my house, was sixteen years of age, tall, genteel, and sprightly; her features must have constituted her a beauty in any country of Europe, if colour were out of the question; and though she could not understand our words, she easily comprehended our signs. I thought the head of this young Agow would have turned with the profusion of riches committed to her disposal, and promised to herself, in the form of antimony, beads, knives, small scissors, and large needles.

The Shum of Geesh was about seventy years of age, with a long white beard, an ornament rare among the Abyssinians. He was called Kefla Abay, the Servant of the River; and he believed that the honourable charge he possessed had been in his family from the beginning of the world. He conceived that he might have had eighty four or eighty five children; and indeed, if the families of his predecessors had been as numerous as his own, there was no great danger of the office devolving upon strangers.



He wore an ox's hide, tanned and scraped to the consistence of Shamoy leather, and fastened round his middle with a broad belt, and over this a cloak with a hood, which covered his head. He had sandals on his feet, which he took off when he approached the marshes of the Nile.

Once a year the different tribes of the Agows meet at the source of the Nile, and sacrifice a black heifer that has never borne a calf. The head of the animal is wrapped in its skin, and what becomes of it I could not learn; the carcase, after having been washed at the fountain, is divided among the tribes, and eaten raw; the only beverage allowed is from the spring: the bones are piled up and burnt. The church of St. Michael Geesh is never opened, and the people are privately hastening its decay, while they pray to the spirit residing in the river, and call it the "Father of the universe," "Light of the world," "Saviour of the world," "Everlasting god," and "God of peace."

The richer sort of the Agows keep serpents of a particular kind in their houses, which they consult before they undertake a journey, or an affair of any consequence. They take this animal from his retreat and place butter and milk, of which he is extravagantly fond, before him; if he do not eat, misfortune is at hand. The Shum told Woldo that the spirit of the river informed him a party was coming to Geesh from Fasil's army; that, being afraid, he consulted his serpent, and that, as the animal ate readily and heartily, he knew we intended him no harm. Before an invasion of the Galla, or the inroad of any other enemy, they say that these serpents disappear, and are not to be found.

The country of the Agows is no where sixty miles



in length, or half that in breadth, yet troops of a thousand or fifteen hundred of these people, in succession, are constantly on their way to Gondar, laden with butter, honey, wax, hides, and other commodities. In such a journey, and in such a climate, it might naturally be supposed that butter would be in a state of fusion; this is prevented by mixing with it the bruised root of a herb called moc-moco, which is of a yellow colour, and in shape resembling a carrot, a very small quantity of which preserves the butter firm and sweet for a considerable time. The trade with the neighbouring Shangalla for gold, elephants' teeth, and very fine cotton, might be carried on to a much greater extent, were it not for the propensity that both nations have to theft and plunder.

Notwithstanding the natural riches of the Agows, taxes, tributes, and war, have rendered them miserable. I saw a number of women, wrinkled and sun-burnt, so as scarcely to appear human, wandering about, with one or two children on their backs, gathering the seeds of grass to make a kind of bread.

The clothing of the Agows is entirely of hides, which they soften and manufacture in a manner peculiar to themselves. The younger sort are nearly naked. Women generally marry about eleven years of age, and none of the married are without children.

Almost every small collection of houses has behind it a large cavern, or subterraneous dwelling cut in the rock, the entrance of which is concealed by thorns and bushes; and all the districts of the Agows have mountains perforated in the same manner. These are probably intended as asylums for the women and cattle on the approach of an enemy. In the principal cavern at Geesh, the heads of the tribes assemble after the sacrifice of the black heifer, and perform some sacred rites which are kept secret.

When I quitted Geesh, my amiable housekeeper bestowed little attention on my presents. She tore her fine hair, which before had been braided in the most graceful manner; she threw herself on the ground within the house, and refused to see me mount my horse; but after we had begun our journey, she came to the door, and followed me with her eyes and good wishes, as long as her person could be seen, or her voice could be heard.

The day after I left Geesh I quitted my former road, and turned to the right, to the house of Shalaka Welled Amlac, to whom I had been recommended by Fasil, and who had been introduced to me at Gondar, as one of the most powerful, resolute, and best attended robbers in Maitsha. Welled Amlac was not at home; his mother, his wife, and his two sisters were, and received me very kindly, as did Fasil's wife, who was their guest; and a cow was instantly slaughtered. The sisters of Welled Amlac were about sixteen or seventeen years of age, and handsome; and Melectanea, the eldest of these young ladies, in conformity to the custom mentioned by Fasil, told me she was to be my companion for the night. Fasil's wife was about eighteen, and was still more beautiful and graceful. Her features were regular, her eyes and teeth were fine, and her complexion was a dark brown: unfortunately, she spoke only Galla. She was of a noble family of that people, which had conquered and settled in the low country of Narea. She said her husband had twenty wives besides herself.

Welled Amlac now arrived, another cow was killed, and the honey wine went plentifully round. The room we were in, which was large, and which contained its master, his mother, wife, sisters, ser-

vants, horses, and mules, night and day, was hung round with trunks of elephants that Welled Amlac had killed with his own hand.

The next morning, I settled with Woldo to his perfect satisfaction, and he consigned me to the care of a servant of an Abyssinian nobleman, my friend. I then distributed presents to the ladies; Melectanea was covered with beads, handkerchiefs and ribbands of all colours; the beautiful wife of Fasil was not forgotten: and I pursued my journey accompanied by Welled Amlac, my host.

In half an hour we came to the ford of the Jemma, a considerable river that joins the Nile a little above the second cataract. Welled Amlac assured me that though I had now quitted Goutto, his country, I was perfectly safe from the people of Maitsha, in whose country I then was; "For," said he, "they come to the same market we do in Goutto; the fords of the Jemma are in my hands; and, did they offer an injury to a friend of mine, were it but to whistle as he passed them, they know I am not gentle." Welled Amlac told me so many anecdotes of himself that I could not doubt his last assertion. Among other things, he said that he and his people plundered the stragglers of the king's army, wherever they found them, after we had forded the Nile. "And what did you with these stragglers," said I, "when you had robbed them? Did you kill them?" "We always kill them," replied Amlac, coolly; "we never do a man an injury, and leave him alive to revenge it."

At four o'clock we came to the banks of the Nile, at the ford of Delakus, which is not far from the entrance of the river into the lake. The Nile was here become a large river; its breadth at this time

was about three quarters of a mile, its depth about four feet and a half, and its current very gentle. Our conductor, Welled Amlac, met with two chiefs of his acquaintance at the ford, who were feasting upon a living cow; and having himself devoured about two pounds of the flesh, and guided us across the river, he reminded me of his services, which did not go unrewarded, and returned to finish his repast.

On the following day, after travelling three hours and a quarter, I left Maitsha by crossing the river Kelti, and entered the road I had taken in my way from Gondar, which is the high road to Buré. Ibaba, the capital of Maitsha, is said to be one of the largest and richest towns in Abyssinia, little inferior to Gondar itself: it has a market every day. The country around it is pleasant and fertile, and the principal Ozoros, or descendants of the kings, have houses and possessions there.

Two days afterwards, I overtook a troop of Agows laden with butter, honey, and untanned hides, and having with them about 300 head of cattle, which they were taking to market at Gondar.

On the ninth day I reached Gondar; that part of the route on my return which differed from the other forming the string, as that in going did the bow. I computed the whole distance in returning to be ninety-three miles.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

PRINCE OF SHOA, CHIEF OF ANGOT, KING OF GINGIRO.

HAVING seen the source of the Nile, I became desirous of quitting Abyssinia and pursuing my travels. Besides, I was disgusted with Gondar; rebels were taken, and traitors were surprized; and hacking human bodies to pieces with knives, in the market place, and leaving them to be devoured by the hyena, was the spectacle that was continually before my eyes. Even the young king, though naturally well disposed, such is the force of habit, viewed with indifference the scenes which chilled my blood. With great difficulty I obtained permission to depart; a permission in this country never granted to strangers, and which would not have been accorded to me, had not the king observed that anxiety and disgust were undermining my health. Before I quit the court of Abyssinia, I shall give some account of two remarkable strangers who presented themselves there, and the reception they met with.

The first of these was Amha Yasous, son of the independent Governor of Shoa, who came, unexpectedly, at the head of a thousand excellent horsemen, equipped at all points, offering his services to the King of Abyssinia against his enemies, and bringing with him a present of five hundred ounces of gold.



The king was encamped with his army. To receive this illustrious visitor, he was seated on his throne, and richly dressed in brocade, with a web of very fine muslin wrapped loosely about him, so as partly to shew, and partly to conceal, the flowers of the cloth of gold of which his vest was composed. His hair was combed out at its full length, and falling down from his head in every direction; and a skewer made of the horn of a rhinoceros, with a golden head upon it, was run through his hair, near the temples. He was perfumed all over with rose-water, and two people stood on the opposite sides of the tent, each with a silver bottle full of the same.

Amha Yasous, at the head of his thousand horsemen, presented himself at the door of the tent, and rode on till he was completely in it; he then dismounted as in a great hurry and surprise, and ran forward, stooping to the foot of the throne, inclining his body lower as he approached; and just before the act of prostration, two young noblemen who had been instructed beforehand, seized him by the arms, and prevented him from touching the ground. The king's hand was uncovered, but not extended, as not meaning that the stranger should kiss it: Amha Yasous, however, after the struggle respecting the prostration was over, seized the hand, and kissed it after some resistance on the part of the king, who, when the back had been kissed, presented the palm likewise, which in this country is a great mark of familiarity and confidence. A small stool about six inches high, and covered with a Persian carpet was placed in the tent. Amha Yasous attempted to speak standing, but was not permitted, being constrained by the two noblemen to sit upon the stool; they then deluged him so with rose-water that I

believe he was never in his life so wet with rain. All this ceremonial was premeditated ; and etiquette could not have been more scrupulously observed in any court in Europe.

Amha Yasous was about twenty-seven years of age, tall, and well made ; his face was uncommonly handsome, and his manners were affable. All the noble women at court fell in love with him ; and he behaved to all with an honourable attention, and decent gallantry. Apartments were assigned him in the palace ; he had a table regularly served ; was waited upon by the king's servants as well as his own, and a guard was stationed at his door.

Amha Yasous had heard of me in Shoa from some priests of the monastery of Debra Libanos in that country, and it was among his first requests to the king to make him acquainted with me : the king therefore ordered me to wait upon him every morning, and we soon became inseparable companions. As I saw Amha Yasous eat raw beef, I asked him if that were the custom among the nations to the southward. He said he believed so, if they were not Mohammedans ; and enquired if it were not also the practice in my country. He said that the people of Shoa were often supplied with Indian goods from Mohammedan merchants on the eastern coast ; but that the Galla had overrun most of the intermediate countries, and rendered the ways dangerous.

The other remarkable stranger was Guangoul, the Chief of the Galla of Angot, who came to pay his respects to the king, and brought with him five hundred foot, and forty horse, and a number of large horns for carrying the king's wine. Guangoul was

a little, thin, ill-made man, about fifty years of age, of a yellow unwholesome colour, neither black nor brown; his legs too small for his body, and his head too large. His long hair was plaited and interwoven with the guts of oxen, which hung down in long strings before and behind, the most extraordinary ringlets I had yet seen. He had likewise a wreath of guts hung round his neck, and several of the same round his waist. Below these was a short cotton cloth dipped in butter, and short drawers. These formed his dress of ceremony, and from his whole body issued streams of butter.

When this chief appears in state in his own country, he rides upon a cow. In state he appeared now, on a visit to the King of Abyssinia, and on a cow he advanced to the royal tent. He had no saddle; but as an indication of state, he leaned exceedingly backwards; while his left arm and shield, stretched out on one side, and his right arm and lance, on the other, gave the idea of a pair of wings.

The king was seated on his ivory seat to receive the stranger, when the smell of carrion gave notice of his approach; and when the beast and her rider appeared in view, the king was seized with such an immoderate fit of laughter that he was obliged to retreat to an apartment behind the throne. In this instance, and in this only, Tecla Haimanout forgot he was a king.

The greasy chieftain dismounted from his cow at the door of the tent, with all his tripes about him, and seeing the king's seat empty, he imagined it was placed there for himself, and gravely sat down on the crimson silk cushion, while butter was running from every part of his person. A general cry of astonishment followed; Guangoul started up, though

ignorant of the cause, and was hurried out of the tent without seeing the king. The cushion was thrown away, and an Indian shawl spread in its place; and, to prevent such an accident in future, the seat was always turned upside down, when the king was not in the tent.

I have no partiality for the guts of cattle myself; on the contrary, I prefer the sight of gold brocade and the scent of rose water: yet I am not certain whether my preference entitles me to decide upon the respective merits of these things; and I have still greater doubts whether it justifies me in giving offence to those whose optics and olfactory nerves differ from my own.

Guangoul went from the tent of the king to that of the Ras, where he was better received.

The horns brought by this Galla chief are the horns of a cow or bull, which are so large that the two will commonly contain nearly six gallons; and they are esteemed so valuable that I have seen them sold at Gondar for four ounces of gold, or ten pounds sterling, the pair. Two of these horns, filled with wine or spirits, are carried commodiously on a woman's back.

Gingiro is one of the nations to the south of Abyssinia. The colour of the people is nearly black, but it is not the black of a negro, and their features are small and straight, as in Europe and Abyssinia. All matters in this state are conducted by magic, and here begins the reign of the devil, to whom this sovereign sacrifices those slaves which his situation denies him the opportunity of selling to his fellow creatures.

The kingdom is hereditary in one family; but the election of the particular prince is in the nobles,



who, however, do not trust wholly to their own sagacity on so momentous an occasion. When the king dies, his body is wrapped in a fine cloth, and put into the skin of a cow killed for this purpose. The princes of the royal family then fly, and hide themselves among the bushes; and those persons to whom the right of election belongs, enter the thickets, beating about, as if in search of game. At length, the Envoy of his Satanic Majesty, in the shape of a bird of prey which they call Liber, appears, hovering over some particular bush, uttering loud cries, without quitting his station. In this bush the prince who is destined to be king of Gिंगiro is found; and, as the people affirm, surrounded by lions, leopards, and panthers. It is easy to believe that such animals might assemble in this country without any supernatural agency; though the interference of some superior power might be requisite to preserve the true prince from their attacks.

As this king is discovered like a wild beast, so his behaviour, when discovered, is not dissimilar. He flies upon his hunters with great fury, wounding and killing all within his reach, till, overcome by force, he is dragged to the throne.

The ceremony, however, does not end here; for though the honour of seeking the king belongs to a certain number of persons, the privilege of disputing the possession of him is vested in a particular family. These attack the people who are conveying the prince from the wood, and a battle ensues in which several persons are killed and wounded. If the second party succeed in taking the destined monarch out of the hands of those who found him, they enjoy all the honours due to the makers of a king.

Another ceremony still remains to be performed;



for before the king enters his palace, two men are to be slain; one at the foot of the tree by which his house is principally supported; the other at the threshold of the door, which must be besmeared with the blood of the victim. It is said that the family whose especial privilege it is to be slaughtered on these occasions, glory in it, and offer themselves to be sacrificed.

On the east side of Debra Tzai, or the Mountain of the Sun, is the road to Walkayt; on the west that to the province of Kuara, and the low country through which lies the way to Sennaar; and by this last I was determined to return to Egypt, or perish in the attempt.

## CHAPTER XXX.

## CONCLUSION OF ABYSSINIA.

**H**AVING taken leave of many persons for whom I had the sincerest regard, and from whom I had received reiterated proofs of friendship, I set out on my journey to Sennaar from the palace of Koseam, and after ascending Debra Tzai, the mountain on which it is situated, I saw the plain flat country before me, to all appearance a thick black wood. Three Greeks, one of whom was nearly blind, an old Janizary, and a Copt, were my only attendants in this perilous journey, except some men who had charge of the beasts, and who were to go no further than Tcherkin. We passed the night at a miserable village whose inhabitants are hewers of wood and drawers of water to Gondar. These people affirm that they are descended from the prophet Jonah. They were undoubtedly Jews, but having been baptised, they are now neither Jews nor Christians. As we could not boast our descent from Jonah, they shewed much reluctance to admit us into their houses, and hid all their pots and drinking-vessels for fear of contamination.

On the following day we got into the great road, and travelled in a direction nearly north. We rested at three villages called Gimbaar, which, being each situated on the top of a pointed hill, have a beautiful appearance from the plain below.

On the third day we found the country fertile, and the soil a black loamy earth; but it is unwholesome and thinly inhabited. In the evening we encamped in the market-place of Waalia. Waalia is a collection of villages, each placed on the top of a separate hill, and the whole inclosing, as in a circle, an extensive piece of ground about three miles over, on which a very well frequented market is kept. Here I was visited by two of the principal Shums, who presented me with two goats, several jars of bouza, and a quantity of excellent bread, and assured me all was peace. "I will answer for you," said one of them, "between here and Tcherkin: after that all is wilderness, and no man knows if he be to meet friend or foe."

The next day we passed the Mai Lumi, or River of Lemons. A prodigious quantity of fruit in all the different stages of ripeness, loaded the branches of these trees, almost to breaking, on one side; while multitudes of flowers, which emitted the most delicious odour, covered the other. The natives make no use of this fruit. Having crossed the river of Lemons, we came to the pass of Dav Dohha, a very narrow defile, full of strata of rocks, like stairs, which are so high that, without leaping, or being pulled up, no horse or mule can ascend them. The descent, though short, is steep, and almost choaked up by huge stones washed down by the torrents. From the Mai Lumi, though the soil was good, the country wore an air of desolation; the huts were hidden in recesses, or in the edges of vallies overgrown with wood; and the few that were exposed to view were more than commonly miserable.

On the fifth day we found the country partly in wood, and partly in plantations of dora; well

watered, and producing abundant crops; but it was not beautiful.

The next day we had a view of a black, bare, ridge of rocks called Magwena; one of these, however, is said to produce every species of verdure in the greatest luxuriance, and here a set of lazy profligate ignorant monks have a monastery.

On the following morning, I dressed and perfumed my hair in the Abyssinian fashion, and put on new clothes; having received intelligence, by one of his servants, that Ayto Confu was expected at his house at Tcherkin. I mounted my horse, and after passing through the midst of several small villages, in an hour and a half we arrived at the mountain of Tcherkin, which we encircled first on the west, and then on the north, and in an hour and a half more I pitched my tent in the market-place of the town. This market-place was a beautiful lawn, shaded by fine old trees of an enormous size, and watered by a limpid brook, running over pebbles as white as snow.

From the descent of Debra Tzai to Tcherkin, the general face of the country was thick black wood, and the roads were rugged and broken. The thermometer was sometimes so high as  $115^{\circ}$ ; but the air always seemed cool in the shade.

I had scarcely got within my tent, when the servant of Ayto Confu hurried me, by a very narrow crooked path, up the side of the mountain. When we arrived at about half the height, we reached the house of Ayto Confu, which was situated on the edge of a precipice, and constructed with canes so neatly put together, as not to be penetrated by rain or wind. When we entered the outer court, I was welcomed by many of my old acquaintance with the

greatest demonstrations of joy, though it was only six days since I had left Koscam.

I was then conducted to an inner apartment, where I saw, not Ayto Confu, but his mother, Ozoro Esther, and the beautiful Tecla Mariam, whom Esther had frequently offered me as a wife; and whom, if I could have persuaded myself to remain in Abyssinia, I should certainly have preferred to every other. Ayto Confu arrived soon after, and with him a great company of noblemen and ladies. The inside of the state rooms was hung with long strips of carpet, and the floors were covered with the same.

I was happy to my wish on this enchanted mountain; but the active spirit of young Confu could not rest. The country abounded with elephants, rhinoceroses, and buffaloes; and Confu was determined to hunt. We mounted on horseback an hour before day, being about thirty in number; exclusive of our Agageers, who are elephant-hunters by profession, dwelling constantly in the woods, and living intirely upon the flesh of the animals they kill. They are exceedingly thin, light, and agile, very swarthy, though few of them are black, and all have European features. Two of these people get upon a horse, one sitting behind the other. As soon as the elephant is found, the man who manages the horse rides as near to his face as possible; or if the elephant fly, he crosses him in all directions. At the same time, he abuses the noble beast, and, as he believes, affronts him, crying out, "I am such a man, and such a man; this is my horse, which has such a name; I killed your father in such a place, and your grandfather in such a place, and I am now come to kill you; you are but an ass in comparison



with them." The elephant, irritated by the noise and interruption, seeks to revenge himself on the horse, which the rider keeps dexterously turning about, to avoid him; while he drops his companion on the other side, who cuts the tendon achilles with a sharp sword which he carries for that purpose. The horseman then wheels round, takes up his companion behind him, and rides full speed in quest of more game, leaving the poor disabled elephant to be pierced with the javelins of the hunters. If the sword be good, and the man not afraid, the tendon is commonly intirely separated; and if it be not, the stress the elephant lays upon it breaks the remainder; in either case, he is incapable of advancing a step.

The elephant slain, his flesh is cut into thongs, and hung in festoons upon the trees to dry, for provision during the rains, as among the Shangalla. When our Agageers had killed two elephants, they could not be persuaded to continue the hunting any longer. They had procured as much meat as would satisfy their present wishes; and, less barbarous than Europeans, they would not continue murder for sport.

We passed the night by a great fire, under the shade of trees, and towards morning we heard the deep groan and cry of the rhinoceroses. Several of the Agageers then joined us, and after we had searched about an hour in the thickest part of the wood, a rhinoceros rushed out, and crossed the plain towards an opposite wood, about two miles distant. Though he trotted with surprising speed, considering his bulk, he was in a very short time pierced by thirty or forty javelins, which he carried with him. These so confounded him that, quitting his purpose

of going to the wood, he ran into a deep ravine with no outlet, breaking above a dozen javelins as he entered. Here he was soon dispatched.

There are, in the vast forests of the low country of Abyssinia, trees of a soft consistence, and a very succulent quality, which are the principal food of the rhinoceros. With his upper lip and his tongue, he pulls down the upper branches of these, and devours them first. Having stripped the tree of its branches, he places his snout as near the bottom of the trunk as he finds his horn will enter, and rips up the tree, reducing it to thin pieces, like so many laths; and when he has thus prepared it, he embraces it in his monstrous jaws, and twists it round with as much ease as an ox would do a plant of celery. Such too is the practice of the elephant, who uses his proboscis to bring down the branches, and his teeth to divide the tree. But it is not always that soft wood is the food of either; for I have seen in the excrements of both, pieces of undigested hard wood, full three inches in diameter.

The rhinoceros possesses an astonishing degree of swiftness, considering the weight and unwieldiness of his body; but though it be true that a horse can seldom come up with him, this is owing to his cunning, not his speed. He forces himself into the thickest parts of the woods; the trees that are dry are broken down as by a cannon shot, and fall behind him and on both sides of him, in all directions. Others, that are more flexible, are bent by his weight and the velocity of his motion; and after he has passed, restoring themselves to their natural position, they sweep the unwary pursuer and his horse from the ground, and dash them to pieces against the surrounding trees. The only hairs of the rhino-

ceros are at the tip of its tail ; they are few and scattered ; but so thick that ten of them will make a whip which will draw blood at every stroke. The rhinoceros I saw killed was thirteen feet in length, not including either the horn or tail, and very little less than seven feet in height from the sole of the foot to the top of the shoulder.

We now hunted homewards. I had been a spectator only of the death of two elephants and a rhinoceros ; but I was now become very expert in the management of Abyssinian arms, and we had not gone far before a wild boar arose, which I immediately killed with a javelin. I then mortally wounded a buffalo with my spear, and two of our attendants dispatched him.

Having passed some days at Tcherkin in festivity and friendship, I took leave of Ozoro Esther, and her company, and set out for Ras el Feel, in my way to Sennaar. This district is dependent upon Abyssinia ; and Yasine, its deputy governor, was my particular friend, and had sent me camels for my baggage. We entered immediately into dark thick woods, overgrown with long grass, and passed some villages of elephant hunters, near one of which we encamped for the night.

On the following day, we pursued our journey through the thickest wood, the scene of much bloodshed between the elephant hunters and the Shangalla, who possess the country lying about four days journey to the north east. We passed the night not without alarm, as fresh foot-steps were seen in the sand, which, by the length of the foot, and the largeness of the heel, my people pronounced to be those of the Shangalla.

The next day we arrived at Saucaho, formerly

the frontier territory of Abyssinia. The town is situated on a rock, which rises in the midst of a plain, and is accessible only at the eastern end, by a narrow, winding road; this seems to be the work of art, and is obstructed at every turning by huge stones, laid there for the purpose of defence. All the other sides of the rock are perpendicular. The town may consist of about three hundred huts or houses, built with canes, and curiously thatched with their leaves. The inhabitants are Baasa, a race of Shangalla. A considerable district of wilds and woods around it belongs to the town; if such a district, abandoned as it is to wild beasts, can be said to belong to man. It is an absolute government, under the King of Abyssinia, with a kettle drum of its own for proclamations; yet it is understood to be dependent on Ras el Feel, and under the controul of the governor of Ras el Feel, who then was Ayto Confu.

Having encamped at the foot of the rock, I sent one of Yasine's men, who had brought my camels, to the chief of Sancaho, desiring him to send me the usual quantity of provisions, and one or two camels, and to deduct the value out of the revenue to be paid to the king. The son of the Erbab, or chief, a woolly-headed black, returned with my messenger, and brought me his father's answer in these words: "My father salutes you; if ye eat what he eats, ye shall be very welcome." On enquiring what his father did eat, he said, "Elephant killed yesterday; and as for the camels ye demand, he tells you he has none; elephants are his camels, and rhinoceroses are his mules."

On hearing this, with a pair of pistols at my girdle, a musquet in my hand, and attended by two

servants well armed, I set out for the town of Sanchaho. We mounted the hill with great difficulty, being several times obliged to pull each other up by the hands. I entered a large room about fifty feet long, hung round with elephants' heads and trunks, and skeletons of the heads of rhinoceroses, hippopotami, and camelopardalises; large lion skins were spread on several parts of the floor like carpets. At the further end of this apartment stood Gimbaro, the Erbab of Sanchaho. He was six feet and a half high, and strongly made in proportion; perfectly black, flat-nosed, thick-lipped, and woolly headed; naked except a cloth about his waist. I could have fancied him one of the cannibal giants of the Arabian Tales. Gimbaro always hunted on foot, and was said among his people, to have killed elephants himself, and each with one blow of his spear. His part of the revenue was paid in buffaloes' hides, elephants' teeth, and rhinoceros's horns.

He did not seem to notice my entering the room till I was near him, when he came forward, bowing, and endeavoured to kiss my hand. "Is it thus, Sir," said I, withdrawing it, "that you pay the revenue to the king? Your refusal is an act of rebellion, and I shall report it to Ayto Confu." Gimbaro begged in the most earnest manner that I would not complain of him. He said that he had always been a faithful servant to the King, the Ras, and Ayto Confu; that the message was sent but in sport; that he begged my pardon; would send me bread and honey, and the camels should be ready in the morning. He added, that he would send his spies out to the eastward, and not a Shangalla should pass to molest us, without our being informed of it. On this I thought proper to be friends with the



black chief; and I ate bread and drank beer with him to shew that my reconciliation was sincere.

At six in the evening, came two strong camels, thirty loaves of bread made of dora, two large wheaten loaves for myself, and a jar of excellent wild honey. I was supplied with an equal quantity of provisions for the journey. I gave the Erbab some presents, and some glasses of brandy; and we parted such cordial friends, that he engaged me to pass a week with him on my return, and to hunt with him the elephant and the rhinoceros.

On the fourth day from Tcherkin, we were so entangled with woods, and so fatigued with cutting the way through them for our camels, that we thought we could proceed no further; and at the end of five hours and a half we were not more than five miles from Sancaho. Soon after, we encamped on the banks of a river among large and beautiful trees.

On the next day, we were preceded by a lion, which was generally only a small gun shot distant; and whenever it came to an open place, it would sit down and growl, as if it meant to dispute the way with us. Our beasts trembled, and were covered with sweat, and could scarcely be made to keep the road. As there seemed to be but one remedy for this annoyance, I took a long Turkish rifle gun, and crawling under a bank, as near as possible to the animal, I lodged the contents in its body. It fell from the bank, on the road before us, quite dead and even without muscular motion. It proved to be a large lioness, and we left her to the inhabitants of a neighbouring village; for we were too much fatigued even to take off her skin. All the people in this country eat the flesh of lions. The thick

wood was here divided by small plains, and at the end of one of these, we found the body of a man newly murdered, the wild beasts not having yet touched it. He had been hamstrung, and his throat had been cut, probably by the neighbouring Shangalla. We ascended a hill on which stands the village of Kantis, inhabited, like Sancaho, by Mohammedan Shangalla of the tribe of Baasa; here we passed the night.

On the sixth day, we proceeded only a mile and a half on our journey, our beasts and ourselves being equally fatigued, and our clothes torn to rags. We encamped at Guanjook, a delightful spot by a river side, presenting small woods of lofty trees, interspersed with beautiful lawns, several cultivated fields bearing cotton, guinea fowls in abundance, and perroquets upon every tree.

On the seventh day of our journey from Tcherkin, we arrived at the Guangue, the largest river I had seen in Abyssinia, except the Nile and the Tacazze. It joins the latter in the kingdom of Sennaar, and the two rivers, when united, are called the Atbara, which gives name to the province. From the Guangue we proceeded to Hor-Cacamoot, or the Shadow of the Valley of Death, the village of my friend, Yasine.

Hor-Cacamoot is situated in a plain in the midst of a wood, so much only of which has been cleared away, as to make room for the miserable huts that compose the village, and for the small quantity of maize that is sown; the principal food of the inhabitants being the flesh of the elephant and rhinoceros. The country from Tcherkin to Hor-Cacamoot is the fat black earth I have often mentioned, the hot

unwholesome country called the Kolla. This, as I have before observed, has been penetrated in two places for the purposes of commerce, and been settled by strangers in order to keep in awe the native Shangalla. One of these places had been my road, by Tcherkin, and through the territory of Ras el Feel; the other lies to the southward of this, and leads by Tchelga.

The thermometer at Hor-Cacamoot was at sun-rise  $61^{\circ}$ , at three in the afternoon in the shade,  $114^{\circ}$ , and at sun-set  $83^{\circ}$ .

My next recommendation was to Fidele, the Sheik of Atbara, who had sent me the strongest assurances of protection before I left Gondar; but at Hor-Cacamoot I received a visit from another Sheik, who advised me to doubt. He affirmed that Fidele had been a robber and a murderer all his days, and was the son of a father no better than himself; and it was agreed that my friend should send a man of confidence, with an ass laden with salt, along with me, without seeming to belong to me, and that if, when at Teawa, the residence of Fidele, I informed this man there was danger, he should mount a dromedary, and give Yazine notice of it with all possible speed.

On leaving Hor-Cacamoot, eleven naked men, with asses laden with salt, were added to my company. After passing through thick brushwood, we encamped at a village called Falaty, in the district of Ras el Feel. It is only three miles and a half distant from Hor-Cacamoot; the name signifies poverty, or misery, and is perfectly well applied.

The next day we continued our journey through almost impenetrable woods, full of thorns, and in two hours we came to a river called Surf el Sheik,

which is the boundary of Ras el Feel, and of the Abyssinian dominions.

Here I took an affectionate leave of my friend Yasine, he having, before we parted, like an old traveller, called all my company together, and obliged them to repeat the Prayer of Peace.

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## CHAPTER XXXI.

### TEAWA.

**F**ROM the river called Surf el Sheik, which forms the boundary between Abyssinia and Atbara, a province dependent upon Sennaar, I proceeded on my way towards Sennaar, the capital of the latter kingdom; and in the evening I arrived at a large cavity, several hundred yards in length, and about thirty feet in depth, made for the reception of water by the Arabs, who encamp by its side after the rains. The water was now almost exhausted, and what remained was intolerably bad, yet thousands of guinea fowls, partridges, and other birds, reduced to feathers, skin, and bone, by hunger and thirst, were flocking around it to drink.

At eight o'clock at night, we came to a resting-place, where the ground, for the space of about half a mile each way, had been cleared of wood, that travellers might repose upon a spot from whence they could see all around them, and guard themselves

from the sudden attack of man or beast. At eleven we pitched our tent in the bed of a torrent which no longer afforded water. The thick wood by which we were surrounded was full of lions and hyenas, and the latter came boldly up with a resolution to attack us. On our lighting a fire, they left us for a time, but, towards morning, they returned in great numbers; one of them attacked a man, tore his cloth from his waist, and wounded him in the back; and a lion took away one of our asses. We now expected to be devoured; and present danger overcame the resolution I had made, not to use our fire-arms, lest they should be heard by banditti. I fired two guns, and ordered my servants to fire two large ship blunderbusses. These presently freed us from our troublesome visitors, though we still heard numbers of them howling in the woods. When day-light appeared, we found two hyenas killed, and a lion mortally wounded.

Though this day's journey had been of eleven hours, we had advanced no more than ten miles; for our beasts were heavily loaded, and it was with the utmost difficulty that either they or we could force our way through the thick woods we had to pass. From our station we saw a most magnificent spectacle, the mountains, from the banks of the Tacazze to the province of Kuara, in a bright flame, the people having set fire to the dry grass.

On the second day of our journey in Atbara, we reached Imseraha, a station where there is water; the wells are situated on a ridge of rock. The Daveina Arabs, the tyrants of the country (and every country I have seen has its tyrants) have desolated this territory. The soil is sandy, and therefore improper for agriculture; but it is thickly overgrown



with trees, and every species of cattle here lives upon the leaves and young branches of trees, even on spots where grass is abundant.

On the third day, after quitting the confines of Abyssinia, we rested at Rashid, which, though full five miles distant from Imseraha, we reached in two hours, for we were flying for our lives. The simoom, or poisonous hot wind, struck us soon after leaving the former of these places, and we were deadly sick with the noxious vapour we had inhaled. Rashid was once full of villages, which have now been ruined by the Daveina. It is fairy land in the midst of an uninhabitable desert. It contains seven or eight wells of good water; is full of large, wide-spreading trees, loaded with fruit and flowers; and crowded with deer of different kinds. When we arrived here, we were so enervated with the simoom, our stomachs were so weak, and our head-achs so violent, that we were unable to pitch our tent, but each, wrapping himself in his cloak, lay down to sleep. To the south-west of Rashid, the Daveina Arabs have a station called Sim-Sim, where is a spring so copious that it supplies a bason near thirty feet deep.

On the fourth day we halted at Imhanzara, also a station of the Daveina, where we found cavities sixty yards long, and from twenty to thirty feet deep, apparently dug by the hand of man. The water was nearly dried up, a foot of it in depth only remaining in one pool. The borders of these reservoirs were thickly planted with acacia and jujeb trees. The fruit of the latter was drying upon the stones; it has a pleasant acid flavour, and forms a part of the sustenance of the Arabs while they reside here. That they had been here recently we had sufficient proof, from the variety of traps and cages, some of them

very ingenious, which had been set to catch the birds; and we were not sorry to quit the place as soon as possible.

On approaching the pool we found a deer that had been killed, and partly eaten by a lion, which, on hearing us, had abandoned his prey. This, however, did not deter five or six hyenas from seizing it, and others were arriving to share the spoil. I took a blunderbuss which contained about forty small bullets; they saw me advancing, looked at me, raising the bristles on their back, and shaking themselves as a dog does when he comes out of the water; and then, giving a short, but terrible grunt, they again fell to devouring their prey. I began to question my own prudence in having ventured so near such a voracious groupe; but, placing myself behind a large tree which had fallen down, I levelled my blunderbuss in the midst of them. Two fell dead upon the spot, two died at the distance of about twenty yards, the others fled without looking back; and, satisfied with my victory, I did not wait the arrival of the next troop.

At four o'clock we left Imhanzasara, and at eight we lost our way in a wood. To add to our misfortune, we found that the water in the skins had evaporated. At nine the next morning, however, we reached the well of Imgellalib, and it was discovered that we had not wandered much out of our way. The fear of dying with thirst, rather than thirst itself, operated so powerfully upon my people, that on their arrival at the well, they drank like camels; and two Abyssinian Moors who had joined us, actually died with drinking. On the preceding day we had travelled fourteen miles in thirteen hours.

The thick forest, which had extended without in-

terruption from Tcherkin, ended at Imgellalib. Here the country was perfectly flat, and the trees afforded no shade, the foliage having been destroyed by the burning of the grass.

On the fifth day our road lay over an extensive plain. In three hours from Imgellalib, we arrived at the well of Garigana, where the water was bad and in small quantity, and the thermometer rose from  $111^{\circ}$  to  $119^{\circ}$  in the shade. In another hour we arrived at the village of Garigana, whose inhabitants had all perished with hunger the year before, their crops of grain having been burnt by the Daveina. The whitened bones of these unfortunate people now strewn the ground, and we encamped among the remains of the dead, no space being found without them.

On the sixth day we passed a small river which had still some pools of water standing in its bed, although its banks were destitute of shade; and, in the evening we arrived at Teawa, the principal village of Atbara, and the residence of the Sheik who commanded the district. The distance from Hor-Cacamoot, in Ras el Feel, as nearly as I could compute it, was about sixty-five miles, and the direction due north; the distance from Sennaar about seventy, and the direction west and by north.

The force of Teawa consisted of about twenty-five horsemen; and the other inhabitants of about twelve hundred despicable Arabs. The Arabs who live in villages are much inferior in courage to those who live in tents, and the latter are the mortal enemies of the former. Teawa had been often threatened by the Daveina; and it had only to remain till they should resolve to attack it, when, its corn-fields being burnt and destroyed in a single night, the bones of

its inhabitants would be all its remains, like those of the miserable village of Garigana.

When I arrived at the pools of water a quarter of a mile short of the town, I dismissed my man of trust, telling him to come to me again in three days. At this place I was met by a man of about seventy years of age, with a long beard, and of a very graceful appearance. He was mounted on horseback, dressed in a large loose gown of red stuff, and a muslin turban, and attended by about twenty mean-looking servants on foot, armed with lances. This personage, who was the Sheik's lieutenant, had two small drums beating and a pipe playing before him. On approaching each other, we both dismounted; he saluted me very courteously, and declared his intention of walking by the side of my horse till we arrived at Teawa. This being over-ruled by invincible obstinacy on my part, we rode into the town together.

We passed a very commodious house, where Hadje Soliman Kaiya, for so this officer was called, ordered my servants to unload my baggage, it being the residence assigned me by the Sheik. We then crossed the market-place, an open space of about five hundred yards, and soon after came to the house of this governor, which was rather a collection of houses, built with canes, and one story high: towards the street was a large hall of unburnt brick, to which we ascended by four or five steps. The floor was covered with straw mats; in the middle was a vacant chair, which was understood to be the place of the Grand Signior; and the Sheik was sitting on the ground, reading, or pretending to read, the Koran. He received me with great politeness and seeming friendship; and, after some conversation on indifferent subjects, he said, holding my hand, "The greater



part of the dangers you have past are, I believe, yet unknown to you; your Moor, Yasine, of Ras el Feel, is a thief worse than any in Habbesh. Several times you have narrowly escaped being cut off by the Daveina whom Yasine had posted to murder you: but God protected you, and I may say also that I have not been wanting." I returned no other answer than the usual one, "Ullah Kerim," God is merciful. The house provided for me consisted of only one large room, and I was conducted to it by Hadje Soliman, the lieutenant.

We had scarcely taken possession of our habitation when several slaves, of both sexes, brought us a number of dishes of meat from the Sheik, with many compliments and good wishes. According to the hospitality of the Arabs, I invited some poor salt-merchants who had joined me on the journey, with asses laden with salt, to partake of the repast; and when it was over, one of them, putting his mouth close to my ear, said "El Sheik el Atbara Seitan." The Sheik of Atbara is the Devil. On this information I instantly dispatched my man of trust to Yasine, requiring him to send some person, as from the King of Abyssinia, who should witness my departure from Teawa. On the arrival of my messenger at Hor Cacamoot, he found that Yasine was gone to Ayto Confu, his superior, at Tcherkin.

My present to the Sheik consisted of a large piece of blue Indian cotton cloth, with gold flowers, a sash of silk and cotton, two ounces of civet, two pounds of nutmegs, and ten pounds of pepper. He received these things very graciously, and gave me professions, promises, lies, and excuses, instead of the camels I asked for my journey to Sennaar. I was requested to give a vomit to the Sheik, which I did



with such good effect that he desired me to administer the same remedy to two of his wives. The ladies informed me by a female slave that they dressed my meat with their own hands, and that they would alter it in any way I might choose to direct.

The next day I waited on the Sheik, and was shewn into a large room, where he was sitting alone in an alcove, and smoking. He proposed to me to turn Mohammedan, in which case, he said, he would give me his daughter in marriage, and I should be the second man in the government of Atbara. Having refused to change my religion, and declined the honours offered me, he said, "Since you won't take my advice, I shall say no more; come and see my harem.

I followed the Sheik through several apartments, well proportioned, but meanly furnished, and in slovenly order, which composed the side of the square that belonged to himself. We then crossed the square to the opposite side, where there were several apartments furnished in a better style; the floors being all covered with Turkey carpets. One of the Sheik's wives was sitting in an alcove, with her face uncovered, and a number of black slaves about her. The circle made way for me; and, first putting my hand to my lips, I touched the ends of the lady's fingers with the ends of mine. By this time the Sheik had brought in his other wife, and set her down by the former. They were both past the middle age, and had never been handsome; one of them, however, was the daughter of Sheik Adelan, the first minister of Sennaar.

I told the Sheik that I had a number of questions to ask the ladies, which, if he pleased, he might hear, but that no other person must be present.

“What has he to do with us and our physician?” said the elder lady; “all his business is to pay you when you have made us well.” “What would become of him,” said the younger, Adelan’s daughter, “if we were to be ill? He would starve for want of people to make ready his meat!” “Hakim,” said the Sheik, “ask what questions you please; I neither desire nor intend to hear them; I hear too much every day, and only wish you would cure these women, or make them dumb; for a sick woman is plague sufficient for the devil.” “Then clear the room of these women servants,” said I, “only leave two or three to attend the ladies.” The Sheik was perfectly able to accomplish this, for he took up a short whip which lay at hand, and happy were they who got first to the door.

I vomited the wives of the Sheik to their entire satisfaction, and viewed with astonishment my offered bride, who was the daughter of the elder of them. She was not yet fifteen; of the tallest middle size; her figure elegant, and her features faultless. They might have served alone for the study of a painter, if he had been in search of perfect beauty. Her mother being a noble Arab, her complexion was a dark brown. At first she was veiled from head to foot; but one of her slaves, as in play, took off the veil, and shewed me this lovely young female. Her long hair was braided and twisted at the top of her head, like a crown, and ornamented with beads and fine white shells; in her ears were plain rings of gold, and round her neck four rows of gold chain, from which hung a number of sequins, pierced. The rest of her dress was a blue shirt that reached to the ground, but was not closed about the neck and shoulders.

At eleven o'clock at night I had a visit from the old lieutenant, who was a murderer, a robber, and a dissembler, like his master. This officer pretended to be my friend; and after having drank something more than twenty cups of coffee, he told me that the Sheik knew I had with me 2,000 ounces of gold, and that as I was in his power, he might take the whole; but that he, the Kaiya, as my particular friend, had prevailed upon the Sheik to be content with 2,000 piastres, only, which, if I would give him, he would in two days dispatch me to Sennaar. "Indeed," said I, "I have not twenty piastres in the world, nor would I give them to him if I had. The Sheik may take all I have, by force; and you may command the party of plunderers, if you please; but I am resolved not to leave Teawa, if I might, except under the conduct of a man who is neither of your Sheik's choosing nor yours." The old man arose, shook the bosom of his cloak, and said he was sorry for it, but he washed his hands of the consequences.

After this, the Sheik employed one of my servants to endeavour to persuade me to give him the 2,000 piastres; assuring him that I should never go alive out of Atbara, if I did not comply with the requisition. He then requested the servant's assistance to rob and murder me; promising that it should never be known, and he should share the booty. Finding these efforts ineffectual, he desired the man to tell me that he should expect me at six o'clock the next morning.

I obeyed the summons, expecting, and prepared for the worst. I had a small blunderbuss with a joint in the stock, so that it folded and hung by my side, under my left arm, unperceived; a pair of

pistols and a knife were at my girdle : and the whole was hidden by my burnoose or cloak. I took with me four trusty servants, well-armed, whom I placed at the outer door, and I entered the house alone. I found the Sheik sitting in an alcove in a spacious room on a large broad sofa like a bed, with India curtains gathered on each side in festoons. On seeing me, he said, in a surly tone, " Are you prepared? Have you brought the needful?" I said, " If you want another vomit, my servants have it, and they are at the outer door." " I want money, not poison," said the Sheik, furiously; " where are your piastres?" " I have neither money, nor poison," I replied; and I turned to leave the room. " Physician! Infidel! Devil! or whatever be your name," cried the Sheik, " hearken to what I say! This is the room in which Mek Baady, a king, was slain by the hand of my father! Look at his blood; it stained the floor, and never could be washed out! I am told that you have 20,000 piastres in gold with you; either give me 2,000 before you quit this room, or you die; I will put you to death with my own hand!" Then, taking up his sword, which lay by him, and tucking up the sleeve of his shirt, like a butcher, he said, " I wait your answer."

I now stepped one pace backwards, and dropping my burnoose behind me, I laid my hand on the blunderbuss, and said in a firm tone of voice, " This is my answer." There needed no more. The Sheik let fall his sword, and threw himself on his back upon the sofa, crying, " Hakim, I was but jesting!" He then called with all his might, " Brahim! Mohammed! All of you! " If one of your servants approach me," said I, " that instant I blow you to atoms!" The women now came to the door; my



servants rushed in: and I took my leave of the Sheik.

The next day we heard the cry of "News from Sennaar!" and presently three men appeared. One of these proved to be a servant of my own, whom I had dispatched from Gondar to Sennaar with letters to a merchant to whom I had been recommended; another was a servant of the King of Sennaar, and the third was a servant of Adelan. The first brought me a favourable letter from the merchant; the two latter were sent to conduct me to Sennaar.

The king's servant was a drunkard, a profligate, and a great friend of the Sheik of Atbara, and having been tutored by him on the evening of his arrival, he declared, the following morning, that he was not to leave Teawa in less than a fortnight, and that the camels were ordered from a distant place. Adelan's servant, a sober respectable young man, on hearing this declaration of his companion, said, that he knew not what orders the king had given, but he knew his master's orders; and if the Sheik did not furnish him with camels, he would take him with him to Adelan; or upon his refusing to go, he would denounce him as a rebel and an enemy. The king's servant then joined his companion, and said he would see me the next night at Beyla.

I had scarcely reached my house, when I was summoned to the Sheik. He held in his hand letters from Yasmine, the purport of which was that if I had not left Teawa in peace before these reached him, Yasmine would be down upon the town, as an enemy, in less than a fortnight; and that if the Davaeina did not engage to burn every stalk of corn belonging to the town, as soon as it was in ear, they should neither eat bread nor drink water in Abyssi-



nia, so long as he was governor of Ras el Feel. Yasmine's men, who brought these letters, were mounted on dromedaries, and armed with coats of mail and head-pieces; and they refused to enter Teawa, to eat the bread of the Sheik, or to drink the water belonging to him, looking upon him as the declared enemy of their master.

The next morning I was told that the camels and all sorts of provisions were ready, and that I might depart any moment I pleased, provided I would make peace with the Sheik, pacify Yasmine, and promise to make no complaint against the Sheik at Senaar. I accepted the conditions; a large breakfast was prepared; Yasmine's men came into the town to see me set out, and were kindly received and clothed by the Sheik; eight camels, with people to attend them, were sent to my house; and the water-skins were filled.

I had one visit to make before my departure, which was to the ladies my patients, and, with the Sheik's permission, I entered their apartments. We parted with reciprocal expressions of friendship and regret; those of the beautiful daughter of the Sheik were fervent. On my return home, I acknowledged every kindness that had been shewn me by some present, and that sent to this lovely young woman consisted of a piece of yellow India sattin, and half a dozen silk handkerchiefs, green and crimson. It was five o'clock in the evening before we could leave Teawa.

When we had advanced a few miles into the plain one of my servants delivered a message with which he had been intrusted by a Moullah, or learned holy man, whom I had frequently seen with the Sheik of Atbara. The purport of it was, that we were not to

trust the servant of the king, but to rely wholly upon the servant of Adelan, and if these two had any dispute to take no part in it; that we should on no account, suffer any persons to join us on the road to Beyla, but, if any attempted it, we should beat them off, and make good our way by force; that the Moullah desired us to be active and vigilant, and not to lose a moment on the road.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

TEAWA TO SENNAAR, HISTORY OF SENNAAR.

OUR journey from Teawa for the first seven hours was over a sandy plain, without water, without grass, without the vestige of any living creature: at midnight we entered a narrow defile. If the Arabs are doubtful of their own superiority, they attack travellers near sun-set, that, if worsted, they may escape; if they think they have the advantage, at the dawn of day, that they may have time to pursue.

At three o'clock on the following day we arrived at Beyla, which is eleven miles west of Teawa, and thirty-one south. We were met by the Sheik at the entrance of the town; and were hospitably entertained with rice, sugar, and fine wheaten bread, all which he had procured from Sennaar, and with deer and guinea fowls from his own neighbourhood. I

had administered medicines to the Sheik with such success that no intreaty could prevail upon him to accept of the smallest trifle for our entertainment; and he solemnly swore that if I importuned him further, he would mount his horse and leave me.

Beyla is a pleasant village, situated towards the bottom of a wooded hill, and overlooking a plain sown with Indian corn, ornamented with timber-trees, and intersected by high hedges, forming inclosures for cattle.

After remaining three days at Beyla, we pursued our journey in a south-west direction, through a flat country, very pleasant, but without water, and at night encamped in a wood about nine miles from Beyla.

On the second day our course was westward. After travelling three hours and a half, we came to the banks of the river Rahad, now foul and fetid, covered with a green mantle, and standing in pools. We forded this river, and in two hours more met it again, and pitched our tents by its side, near the huts of a stationary tribe of Arabs called Cohala, who are subjects of the Mek or Melek of Sennaar.

On the third day from Beyla we continued along the banks of the Rahad, or Thunder. This river rises near Tchelga, passes between the Abyssinian province of Kuara and the territory of Sennaar, and falls into the Nile at Habharras, about thirty-eight miles below the capital of the latter kingdom. While in Abyssinia, this stream is called the Shimfa.

On the fourth day we passed through several small villages of Cohala Arabs, and after travelling five hours and a half, we came to the river Dender, standing now in pools; but, by the distance be-

tween its banks, and the depth of its channel, it should seem that, in time of rain, it contained nearly as much water as the Nile. The banks were overgrown with the rack and the juheb tree, both of great beauty; but the wood, which had continued with little intermission from Beyla, extended no further towards Sennaar. We found here the main body of the Cohala, with their cattle; and were plentifully supplied with excellent milk, which I had scarcely tasted since I left Gondar.

At six o'clock in the evening we left our shady place of repose on the banks of the Dender, and entered a large plain with not a tree before us. We soon, however, found ourselves encompassed with a number of villages, placed at equal distances in the form of a semi-circle; the houses with conical roofs, as is always the case within the tropical rains. The plain was of a red soapy earth, and the corn just sown; this was on the 24th of April. The whole country was in perfect cultivation; and though at this time it had a bare appearance, it must have a magnificent one when waving with grain. At nine we halted for the night at a village of Pagan Nuba.

These Nuba are all soldiers of the Mek, or King of Sennaar, and are cantoned in villages, which, at the distance of four or five miles, surround the capital. They are either purchased or taken by force from Fazuclo, and the provinces to the south; and, having settlements and provisions given them, and arms put into their hands, they never desert; but live a domestic and sober life. Many of them whom I conversed with seemed a gentler sort of Negro than the Funge their masters, who compose the government of Sennaar; but few even of their priests, understood Arabic.

The Nuba pay adoration to the moon, and testify great joy at its first appearance. They also worship a tree and a stone, but it is a tree and a stone of their own country, not of Sennaar. They are immoderately fond of the flesh of swine, and have great herds of these animals in their possession. They rarely become Mohammedans, but the generality of their children do. The Mek retains about 14,000 of these Nuba near Sennaar, to keep the Arabs in subjection; they are very quiet, scarcely ever known to be guilty of any robbery or mutinous disorder, and always declare for the master whoever he may be.

There is no river in the immense plain inhabited by these Nuba, but water is drawn from wells. They do not eat their meat raw, like the Abyssinians, but make ovens in the ground, which they heat with the stalk of millet or dora, and the dung of camels. They procure fire by turning a pointed stick between their hands in the manner of a chocolate mill, the point being placed on another stick; and so prepared is every thing to take fire in this excessively hot climate, that both sticks are in a flame in a moment. They bake their hogs whole, in a cleanly and not disagreeable manner.

On the fifth day, at four o'clock in the afternoon, we left the villages of the Nuba, intending to arrive at Basboch, where is the ferry over the Nile; but we had scarcely advanced two miles along the plain, when we were inclosed by a whirlwind, or what at sea is called a water-spout. A camel which was nearly in the centre of its vortex was lifted from the ground, and thrown down at a considerable distance, and several of its ribs were broken. Although I was not in the centre, it whirled me off my feet, and threw me on my face with such violence as to make



the blood gush out at my nose. It took away my sense and breathing for an instant, and when I recovered I found my mouth filled with mud, and saw myself and my people plastered with a coat of the same, as smoothly as if it had been laid on with a trowel. The whirlwind divided a small hut as if it had been cut through with a knife, leaving one half standing, and dispersing the materials of the other over the plain. I computed the sphere of its action to be about 200 feet.

As soon as we recovered from the effects of the whirlwind, we took shelter in one of the villages of the Nuba, where we were treated with the greatest hospitality, roasted hog being given us for our entertainment, and a neat clean hut set apart for my repose. The Nuba told us that it was fortunate the whirlwind had involved a great quantity of water; for that had the sand and dust arisen in the same proportion, without being moistened, we should infallibly have been suffocated. They added that these tempests were frequent at the beginning and at the end of the rainy season; and they cautioned us, whenever we should see one of them coming, to fall on our faces, and keep our lips close to the ground while it passed, as it would then neither have the power to raise us from the earth, nor to suffocate us. Some of the Nuba watched for us during the night, taking care of our beasts and baggage, while they sung and replied to each other alternately in notes full of melody.

My host having provided for my accommodation, went to inform Sheik Adelan of the unexpected and extraordinary guest who occupied his house. He found the minister at supper, but he was immediately admitted, and a multitude of questions were asked

him. He described our colour, our number, the unusual size of our fire-arms, the poorness of our attire, our cheerfulness and affability, our being contented with any sort of food, and particularly our having eaten of the hog. A man who was present testifying his abhorrence of this, Adelan said of me to my host, "He is a soldier and a Kafr like yourself. A soldier and a Kafr, when travelling in a strange country, should eat any thing, and so does every other man that is wise. Go you, and stay with them at Basboch till I have time to send for them to town."

On the sixth day we set out from the village, keeping something to the westward of south-west, across this immense plain, with villages of the Nuba on every side; and in three hours we arrived at Basboch, which is a large assemblage of the huts of these people, and has the appearance of a town. It is situated on the eastern bank of the Nile, and not a quarter of a mile above the ferry.

The governor of Basboch, a venerable old man of about seventy years of age, so feeble that he could scarcely walk, received me with great complacency, saying, "O Christian, what dost thou at such a time, and in such a country!" Kafr, or Infidel, is the common term among these people, and I was much surprized at the civil one, Nazarani, or Christian, till I found that this old officer had been several times at Cairo. Sennaar is about two miles and a half south south-west of Basboch. I heard the evening drum very distinctly, and not without anxiety, when I considered the brutal character of the people I was going to visit. I had here a clean and comfortable hut to lodge in, and was supplied, though sparingly, with provisions. The Nile ran north and

south, and seemed something broader than the Thames at Richmond; its banks were of fine white sand, and the country appeared flat and bare.

From the confines of Abyssinia to Teawa, the time passed in actual travelling was about forty-eight hours; from Teawa to Basboch about fifty-four.

The servant of Sheik Adelan left us at Basboch to give his master an account of our journey, and of our safe arrival. He found him well informed of all that had happened at Teawa; and, speaking of the Sheik of Atbara, he said, in great anger, "Will no one save me the disgrace of hanging that wretch!"

Leave was sent us to enter Sennaar, and we embarked on the Nile in so indifferent a boat that it was obliged to pass backwards and forwards several times before we got all our packages landed on the western side. This business excited either the curiosity or the appetite of the crocodiles, one in particular of which swam twice over the river by the side of the boat. He was making his third trip, when, weary of his company, I fired at him with a rifle gun, and shot him in the belly. He dived to the bottom, leaving the water deeply tinged with his blood; and the next day he was brought to me by the people of the ferry, who had found him quite dead at the bottom of the river. He was about twelve feet long; and the boatmen told me that crocodiles of this size were more fierce and dangerous than the large ones. The Nuba of Sennaar eat the flesh of the crocodile; it looks much like that of the conger eel, but I did not taste it.

Before I enter the city of Sennaar, I shall give some account of the foundation of the monarchy, and the nature of the government.

Many Arabs of the Beni Koreish, the family of

Mohammed, came over to Beja and the eastern part of Nubia, where they lived in small towns or villages, and were distinguished by the name of Jahaleen. These people had their prince, whose general inauguration name was Welled Ageeb, Son of the Good, contracted into Wed Ageeb. This prince was no more than the Chief of the Arabs, to whom the others paid a tribute, to enable him to maintain his dignity, and a sufficient strength to enforce his orders, while each tribe remained under the government of its own Sheik. The residence of the Arab prince was Gerri, a town upon the ferry of the Nile, which leads to the Desert of Bahiouda, Dongola, and Egypt. This was a well-chosen situation, being a kind of toll-gate to catch the Arabs, who, with their flocks, were obliged every year to seek the sandy desert, to avoid the fly; and here the Arab chief, with a large army of light horse, stood in the way of their return to their pastures, till they had paid the tribute he demanded.

In the year 1504, a black nation hitherto unknown, inhabiting the banks of the western Nile in about lat. 13°, made a descent, in a multitude of canoes or boats, upon the Arab provinces; and, in a battle fought near Herbagi, defeated Wed Ageeb. They forced this prince to a capitulation, by which the Arabs agreed to surrender to their conquerors one half of their present stock, and one half of the increase every subsequent year, to be levied at the time of their passing to the sands to avoid the fly. On this condition the Arabs were to enjoy their possessions unmolested, and Wed Ageeb his place and dignity.

This race of Negroes is known in their own country by the name of Shillook; and their country, which

lies on the banks of the western Nile, is called El Aice. They founded the city of Sennaar, and removed the seat of government of Wed Ageeb to Herbagi, that he might be more immediately under their own eye. At the establishing of this monarchy, the whole nation of the Shillook were Pagans, but they were soon after converted to Mohammedanism, and took the name of Funge. They say this term means Lords, Conquerors, Free Citizens; and they are at liberty to give it what interpretation they please, as no foreigner knows enough of their language to contradict them. It is certain that the term is applied only to those born east of the western Nile; and it does not appear to me that they should pride themselves on being free citizens, when the sole title of nobility among them is that of slave.

Although the founder of the monarchy of Sennaar began with a very remarkable conquest, it does not appear that his successors added much to their kingdom. In the beginning of the eighteenth century one of them subdued the province of Fazuclo.

Nearly one half the number of the kings of Sennaar, from the first establishment of the monarchy, have been deposed and murdered; and the king ascends his throne under an admission that he may be lawfully put to death by his own subjects and slaves upon a decree of the great officers assembled in council that it is not for the advantage of the state he should reign any longer. This custom bears too hard upon royalty. Kings are men, and, as such, must err. As, however, the errors of sovereigns involve the happiness of a multitude of other men, it does not appear to me to be necessary to allow the continuance of them. In this case, as in many others, a middle course may be best; I therefore should not



abolish the council of the great officers of Sennaar, but when it had decreed that it was for the advantage of the state the king should reign no longer, I would transport him to the summit of some fertile mountain, and leave him every enjoyment but the power of doing mischief.

The King of Sennaar has the privilege of being murdered according to rule. An officer of his own family, who is distinguished by the title of Seedy el Coom, Master of the Household, can alone perform this office. He has no vote in deposing his sovereign, nor is any guilt imputed to him for the murder; he is merely the instrument that executes the decree of the council. I became well acquainted with the present licensed regicide, who had put to death the late king and three of his sons, and who expected every day to be called upon to perform the same office for the reigning monarch. The king also entertained the same opinion; yet there was no malice on one part, nor jealousy on the other.

I asked this officer why he murdered the sons of the late king in the presence of their father. He answered with great coolness that he did not dare to do otherwise; that the king had a right to see his sons slain in a regular and a lawful manner, by him, who was the proper person, by a sword, which was the proper instrument, and by cutting their throats, which was the most respectful and least painful method of inflicting death; and that, if things had not been done according to order, the princes might have fallen into the hands of their enemies, and their end have been more painful and ignominious.

I then asked the Seedy el Coom if he were not afraid, when he entered the king's presence, which he was obliged by his office to do twice every day,

that, foreseeing what was likely to happen, the king might take a fancy to turn executioner himself. He said, by no means; the king knew that he had no hand in what might befall him; that if it were come to the point that he must die, the rest was a matter of decency; and it would undoubtedly be his choice to die in private by the hands of his own relation, rather than be slain before the populace by a hired assassin.

I have already mentioned that the governor of Atbara shewed me the blood of a king of Sennaar, shed by his father in the place in which we then stood. This king was the father of the present, and also of the late king. He was taken prisoner in fighting, and sent to Teawa, where he was put to death by order of Sheik Adelan. The people murmured against Adelan exceedingly on account of this injustice; not that the king was murdered, for that was in the due order of things, but because he was not murdered according to his peculiar privilege, by his lawful murderer, and with the lawful instrument of death.

Upon the death of a king of Sennaar, his eldest son succeeds by right; and, immediately after, as many of the brothers of the reigning prince as can be found are put to death by the Seedy el Coom. No female succeeds to the sovereignty: the princesses have no settled state nor revenue, and are little more regarded than the daughters of private individuals. The royal family, like their subjects, were originally negroes, and so they still remain, except when they are born of Arab women, in which case the black colour of the father cedes to the whiter colour of the mother, as it had done in the person of the present king.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

AUDIENCE OF THE KING OF SENNAAR,  
AND OF ADELAN.

ON entering Sennaar, we were conducted by Adelan's servant to a very spacious good house, two stories high, belonging to the minister himself; and the next morning I received a message desiring me to wait upon the king. The palace was only one story high, the walls were of clay, and the floors of earth, but it covered a great space of ground. The **chambers** through which we passed were all unfurnished; many of them had been barracks for soldiers, though now I did not see more than fifty soldiers on guard. The king was in a small room, not twenty feet square, to which we ascended by two short flights of narrow steps. The floor of the room was paved with square tiles, over which was laid a Persian carpet; the walls were hung with Persian tapestry, and the whole was in good order.

The king was sitting on a mattress laid on the ground, and around him was a number of Venetian cushions of cloth of gold. His dress did not correspond with this magnificence; for it consisted only of the large, loose Soudan shirt, made of the blue cotton cloth of Surat, which covered his feet, and differed only from that of his servants in being double stitched at the neck and seams with white silk.

He wore nothing on his head but his own short black hair; his colour was as light as that of an Arab; he appeared to be about thirty-four years of age; and his physiognomy was expressive of meanness and irresolution. On my advancing and kissing his hand, he seemed at a loss what to say, and then asked for an Abyssinian interpreter. I told him in Arabic that I believed I understood as much of that language as would enable me to answer any inquiries he might have to make. "Downright Arabic, indeed!" said he, "You did not learn that language in Habbesh!" I answered, "No, I have been in Egypt, where I learned it; but it is spoken in Habbesh." "Impossible!" said he; "they know no language in Habbesh but their own." I then delivered to the king a letter from the Shereef of Mecca, and another from the King of Abyssinia. Having read them he said, "You are a physician and a soldier?" "I am both upon occasion," replied I. "But the Shereef's letter tells me also that you are of a noble family, and in the service of a great king called Engliseman, who is master of all the Indies?" "I am of a good family in my own country," said I, "and my king is the greatest sovereign upon earth; the Indies make but a small part of his dominions." "The greatest sovereign upon earth!" repeated a man, whom, by his white cotton frock, and a white shawl which covered his head and a part of his face, I knew to be a man of learning and law, "You forget the Grand Signior! There are four great kings, Othman, Fersee [Persia], Bornou, and Habbesh." "I neither forgot the Grand Signior, nor did him wrong," rejoined I, "What I have said, I have said."

"How comes it," said the king, "you that are

noble ; so learned that you know all things, all languages ; and so brave that you fear no danger, but pass with two or three old men into such countries as this and Habbesh ; how comes it that you do not stay at home, eat, drink, take pleasure and rest, and not wander like a poor man, exposed to every danger ?” “ I am content with the bread that is given me,” said I, “ and I am bound by a vow to travel in hardships and dangers, doing all the good I can to poor and rich, serving every man, and hurting none.” “ Tybe ! that is well,” said the King. “ He is a dervish,” said one of the learned men. The king then made a sign, and a slave brought a cushion ; I would have refused it, but I was obliged to be seated.

One of the gentlemen of the white robe, desirous to display his learning, now asked me, with a look of great wisdom, what was my opinion concerning the coming of Hagiuge Magiuge [Gog and Magog], and whether my books agreed with theirs. “ I do not know,” I replied, “ till I hear what is written in yours.” “ Hagiuge Magiuge,” said the learned man, “ are little people not so big as bees, or like the zimb, that come in great swarms out of the earth, aye, in multitudes that cannot be counted. Two of their chiefs are to ride upon an ass ; and every hair of that ass is to be a pipe ; and every pipe is to play a different kind of music ; and all that hear and follow them are to be carried to hell.” “ Then,” said I, “ my books differ greatly from yours ; for the Hagiuge Magiuge of my country are prodigious giants, and never move from their place. But I should not fear yours, were they twice as little as you say they are, and twice as skilful musicians ; for I am not so fond of music as to go to hell for any tunes that either they or an ass can play.”



The king laughed excessively, and I rose to take leave, asking, when it would be convenient to him to receive my present. He said, not to-night, as I might be fatigued, but he would send me notice when to come. I passed through the great square before the palace, and afterwards through the street, in both of which was a number of people, and every one offered me some insult.

The drum beat a little after six o'clock in the evening, and we had then a dinner sent us of camel's flesh, stewed with a viscous herb called bammia. The king's impatience to receive my present did not permit him to wait longer than eight o'clock, when a servant from the palace came to tell me that now was the time to bring it. I found the king sitting in a large apartment at some distance from the former. He had no clothes on, but several pieces of apparel were lying around him, and on his knees; and a servant was rubbing him with elephant's grease, which was dropping from his hair like water. The king asked me if I ever greased myself, as he did; adding that it made the body strong and the skin smooth. I replied that the scent was indeed strong, and that I could not bear to use the grease, though my skin were to become as rough as that of the elephant itself. "As for the scent," said the king, "you will find that cured presently."

The king then retired to another room, where he was deluged with pitchers of cold water; and when he returned, a slave anointed him with a sweet ointment, of which civet made a part of the composition. I asked him why he did not use rose-water. He said he got it from Cairo when the merchants arrived, but it was long since any had visited Sennaar; and his people could not make rose-water, as the rose

would not grow in his country; the women, however, made something like it from the flower of the lemon.

The king's toilette being finished, I produced my present, which I told him the King of Abyssinia had sent him, hoping that, according to the faith and custom of nations, he would protect me while here, and send me safely and speedily into Egypt. He said there was a time when he could have done all this and more, but those times were changed: Sennaar was in ruin, and not like what it once was. He ordered some perfumed sherbet to be brought for me to drink in his presence, as a pledge that my person was in safety, and then retired to sup with his ladies.

Some days after this, I had my audience of Sheik Adelan at Aira, which is three miles and a half to the southward of Sennaar. We set out early in the morning, and walked the greater part of the way by the side of the Nile, which was here divested of its beauty, having no trees, the bottom being foul and muddy, and the edges white, with small concretions of calcareous earth. We then struck to the right, across a large sandy plain, without trees or bushes, and came to Adelan's habitation.

Two or three very considerable houses, consisting of one story each, occupied the middle of a square which was half an English mile on every side, and inclosed by a high fence of strong reeds or canes, joined together in fascines by stakes and cords. On the outside of the inclosure, on each side the gate, were six houses of a slighter construction; and close to the fence were sheds, under which the soldiers slept, with their horses picquetted before them. Above the sleeping-place of each man, and covered at top from the weather, were hung a lance, a small

oval shield, and a large broad sword. These sheds I understood were the quarters of the couriers, who, being Arabs, were not allowed to lodge within the inclosure.

Within the gate was a number of barracks, with the horses of the soldiers picquetted in ranks, each with his head towards his master. It was one of the finest sights I ever saw of the kind; the horses being none less than sixteen hands high, all finely made, as strong as our coach horses, but exceedingly quick and active in their motions. Their forehands were rather thick and short, their eyes, ears, and heads, most beautiful. They were mostly black, though some were black and white, and some completely white, with white eyes and hoofs, which did not add to their beauty.

Upon each man's quarters, opposite to his horse, was hung a steel shirt of mail, with an antelope's skin, made soft like shamoy, to cover it from the dew. Above these, was a head-piece of copper, without crest or plumage, suspended by a lace; to this was added an enormous broad sword in a scabbard of red leather; and, on the pommel of the saddle, hung two thick gloves like our hedgers' mittens. I was told that within this inclosure there were 400 horses, which, with their riders, and their armour and accoutrements, were the property of Sheik Adelan; and I am convinced that no body of cavalry could be more magnificently disposed under the direction of any European power. There were five or six of these inclosures, no one half a mile distant from the other, which contained the horses, slaves, and servants of the king.

Adelan was sitting upon a piece of the trunk of a palm-tree, in front of one of the divisions of his

horses, which he seemed to be contemplating with pleasure; and a number of black people, his friends and servants, were standing round him. He was about sixty years of age, above six feet high, and rather corpulent. He had the colour and features of an Arab, with large piercing eyes, a determined, though a very pleasing countenance, and rather more beard than falls to the lot of people in this country. He had on a long drab-coloured camblet gown, lined with yellow satin, and a camblet cap like a head piece, with two short points that covered his ears. This was the dress he wore when he visited his horses early in the morning, a custom he never neglected.

On my coming near him, Adelan rose, and, without any salutation, said to me, "You that are a horseman, tell me, what would your King of Habbesh give for these horses?" I answered, in the same tone, "What king would not give any price for such horses if he knew their value!" "Well," said he, in a lower voice, turning to those about him, "if we are forced to go to Habbesh, as Baady was, we will take our horses with us."

We then went into a spacious saloon hung round with mirrors and scarlet damask, in one of the sides of which were two large sofas covered with yellow and crimson damask, with cushions of cloth of gold, like those of the king. Adelan now took off his camblet gown and cap, and remained in a coat of crimson sattin, which wrapped over his breast, and reached below his knees: this was girded round his waist with a sash, in which was stuck a short dagger, in an ivory sheath mounted with gold. He wore upon his finger one of the largest and most beautiful amethysts I ever saw, and in one of his ears a small gold ear-ring.



“Why have you come hither,” said Adelan to me,” on foot, without arms, and without attendants?” “I was told,” replied I, “that horses were not kept at Sennaar, and therefore I did not bring any.” “You imagine you have come through great dangers, and so you have,” said Adelan; “but what do you think of me, who am day and night in the fields, surrounded by hundreds and thousands of Arabs, who would eat me alive if they dared?” “A brave man, accustomed to command, as you are,” answered I, “does not regard the number of his enemies, but their ability; a lion fears ten thousand sheep no more than he does a single one.” “True,” said Adelan. “Look out at the door; these are their chiefs, whom I am now taxing; and I have brought them hither that they may judge from what they see, whether I am prepared for them, or not.” “You could not do better,” said I. “But, with regard to my own affairs, I wait upon you from the King of Abyssinia, desiring safe conduct through your country into Egypt, and with his royal promise that he will return that favour to you, or grant any other favour you may require of him.”

Adelan took the letter of the King of Abyssinia, and read it; then said, “The King of Habbesh may be assured that I am always ready to do more for him than this. It is true we have had no formal peace; but neither are we at war; we understand one another as good neighbours ought to do; and what else is peace?” “I have nothing to do with peace or war between nations,” said I: “I am a stranger and a traveller, seeking my way; I beg a safe conduct through your kingdom, and the usual rights of hospitality while I am in it; and one of the favours I beg is your acceptance of a small pre-



sent." "I will not refuse it," said Adelan. "but it is quite unnecessary. I have faults like other men; but to injure or plunder strangers was never one of them. Mohammed Abou Kalec, my brother, is, however, a much better man to strangers than I am; you will be lucky if you meet him here; if not, I will do for you what I can when the confusion of these Arabs is over."

The servant of Adelan who had conducted me to Sennaar then approached his master's ear, and said in a kind of whisper, "Should he go often to the king?" "When he pleases," replied Adelan. "He may walk in the town, but never alone; and he may go to the palace, that when he returns to his own country he may report that he saw a king at Sennaar, who neither knows how to govern, nor will suffer others to teach him; who knows not how to make war, yet will not sit in peace." I was then sent into another room, where I found a plentiful breakfast.

On leaving the house, I kissed the hand of Adelan. "Sheik," said I, "when I pass these Arabs in the square, will it disoblige you if I converse with some of them, out of curiosity?" "By no means," said Adelan. "Converse with them as much as you please; but don't let them know where they can find you at Sennaar; or they will be in your house from morning till night, will eat up all your provisions, and then cut your throat if they can meet with you upon your journey."

I had a long conversation with these Arabs. They were all on their way northward to their respective countries in the sands, to the east of Mendera and Barbar. The fly had compelled these people to migrate from the fat and fertile lands to the southward of Sennaar; and the sands, so barren and desolate

during the rest of the year, were now, on the 8th of May, beginning to be crowded with cattle and inhabitants. The troops of Sennaar, few in number, but well provided, stood in the way of this migration, till every Arab Chief had given in a well verified inventory of the stock of his tribe, and made a composition with Sheik Adelan.

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

RESIDENCE AT SENNAAR. ACCOUNT OF SENNAAR.

I RETURNED to Sennaar well pleased with my reception at Aira. I had not seen, since I left Abyssinia, a man so open and frank in his manners as Sheik Adelan; but he was exceedingly engaged in business, and it was of such extent that it seemed impossible to be terminated in a much longer time than I wished to stay at Sennaar. In my return to town, every man I met occasioned some altercation, offered some insult, or made some demand for gold, cloth, or tobacco, from which I found it difficult to extricate myself.

The contemptuous manner in which Adelan had spoken of his sovereign made a strong impression upon my mind. The Seedy el Coom also told me that the king stood upon very precarious ground; that, of the three brothers, his generals, Adelan and Abou Kalec were at the head of armies in the field, and Kittou had the disposal of all the forces in Sen-

naar; and that the king was little esteemed, and had neither experience, friends, money, nor soldiers. Hadgi Belal, a native of Morocco, established as a merchant at Sennaar, to whom I had letters of credit, told me that nothing could be expected from Sheik Adelan without going to Aira; that he would never trust himself in Sennaar during the life of the present king; but that the moment he assembled his troops without the town he was absolute. This merchant also told me that he had been questioned by the king concerning me; that he had been asked what sort of man I was? how such a man as I had ventured to pass such deserts with only four or five old servants? what it was I came to see? why I had not Englishmen with me, instead of beggarly Copts, Arabs, and Turks, who were not of my religion? When Hadgi Belal told the king that I had left Abyssinia because I was weary of the perpetual war which prevailed in that kingdom, he said, "He has chosen well to come into this country for peace."

While I was revolving these circumstances in my mind, I received a message from the king, desiring me to go to the palace. I found him alone, and in ill humour. He asked me in a very peevish manner if I were not yet gone. I replied, "Your majesty knows I cannot go from Sennaar without assistance from you." "How could you think of coming this way?" said the king. "Nobody in Abyssinia imagined," said I, "that you were not able to give a stranger safe conduct through your own dominions." He then, without speaking, made a sign for me to depart, which I did immediately.

In the afternoon of the same day, the king sent for me again, when he told me that several of his wives were ill, and desired I would give them my

advice. I was much pleased with this commission, as I had hitherto found my attendance on the fair sex advantageous to myself. I am not certain, however, that this term can be applied with precision to the sable ladies of the King of Sennaar. I was admitted into a large apartment, very ill lighted, in which were about fifty women, all perfectly black, and without any covering except a piece of cotton cloth round the waist. While I was considering whether these might all be queens, or whether any queen were among them, one of them took me by the hand, and led me, rudely enough, into another apartment. This was much better lighted than the former; and upon a large sofa, covered with blue Surat cloth, sat three persons clothed from the neck to the feet in shirts of the same material.

One of these ladies, who I found was the favourite, was about six feet high, and corpulent beyond all proportion. She seemed to me, next to the elephant and the rhinoceros, the largest living creature I had ever seen. Her features were those of a Negro; a ring of gold passed through her under lip, and weighed it down, till, like a flap, it covered her chin, and shewed her teeth, which were very small and fine: the inside of her lip was coloured black with antimony. Her ears reached down to her shoulders, and had the appearance of a pair of wings; in each was a ring of gold about five inches in diameter, and nearly the thickness of a man's little finger. The weight of these had drawn down the ear so much that three fingers might pass through the holes that had been pierced for them, above the ring. She had a necklace of gold of several rows, one below another, to which were hung as many rows of sequins; and on her ancles were two mana-

cles of gold, larger than any I had ever seen on felons ; so large that I could not conceive it possible for her to walk with them, till I understood that they were hollow.

The other ladies were adorned much in the same manner ; except that one of them had chains of gold which came from her ears, and were fastened to the outside of her nostrils, and a ring put through the gristle of her nose, and hanging down to her mouth. The whole had something of the appearance of a horse's bridle. On my approaching these ladies, the larger one put her hand to her mouth, and kissed it, saying, "How do you do, Merchant?" I answered, "Peace be among you. I am a physician, and not a merchant."

Having given me a detail of their numerous complaints, the three queens desired to be bled. I performed the operation with great success ; the room streamed with royal blood ; and the whole concluded with their insisting upon my giving them the instrument which I had used on this occasion, and bleeding two of their slaves to shew them how to perform the operation.

Another night I was called upon to administer emetics to the queens and several of the great ladies. The patients were numerous ; the evacuations were copious ; the air was intensely hot ; and the black figures were groaning around me : all together gave me some idea of the punishments of the lower world, and made me almost repent practising physic in this. My mortifications, however, did not end here ; for when my royal patients recovered, they expressed a desire to see the colour of my skin, and insisted upon my being stripped to the waist. The whole of the female court and attendants flocked to the spectacle.



Resistance were vain ; I was surrounded by fifty or sixty women, each full six feet high, and strong in proportion. Upon seeing the whiteness of my skin, they all uttered a loud cry, in token of dislike, and shuddered, seeming to consider it as the effect of disease. For my part, I was not without apprehension that, if the king should happen to enter during this exhibition, he might take a fancy to strip off the skin that had excited their curiosity ; though I may say, with great truth, that his ladies and myself had but one sentiment, which was disgust. I afterwards understood that among the crowd of women were many sisters of the king.

Kittou, Adelan's and Abou Kalec's brother, who had the care of the town, advised me to keep within my own house as much as possible, and never to go out of it without having two or three black people to attend me. " While you are in my brother's house, and we are alive," said Kittou, " nobody dares molest you. You are at liberty to refuse admittance to any person, whether he come from the king or no, only saying that Adelan forbids it. I will answer for the rest."

During this melancholy confinement I put together the following particulars of the country and people of Sennaar.

The town of Sennaar is in lat.  $13^{\circ} 34'$  north, and in long.  $33^{\circ} 30'$  east from the meridian of Greenwich. It is situated on the western bank of the eastern, or Abyssinian Nile. The ground on which it stands rises just enough to prevent the river from entering the town, during the inundation ; though, at that time, it rises nearly to the level of the street. The town is very populous, and contains many good houses ; those of the great officers are two stories

high, with parapet roofs. They are all built with clay, mixed with a very little straw.

While I was at Sennaar, there happened to be a week of constant rain, with loud thunder, and great darkness to the south. The Nile increased with violence, and entered the houses which stood upon its banks, which not being constructed for such a contingency, some of them melted and fell. The whole stream was covered with wreck of houses, canes, wooden bowls and platters, living and dead camels and cattle; and a hyena, endeavouring to cross before the town, was surrounded and killed by the inhabitants.

The heat at Sennaar is excessive. From 70 to 78 degrees of the thermometer is cool at Sennaar; from 79 to 92 is temperate. We bear a great degree of heat better here than in our own climate, and the natives are still less sensible of it. While I was lying on a carpet, in a room deluged with water, and was perfectly enervated, the thermometer being at 116°, I saw several black labourers pulling down a house, and working with great vigour, without seeming to be incommoded by the heat.

There is a constant mortality among the children in this metropolis, so that, to all appearance, the people would become extinct if they were not kept up by a constant succession of slaves from the countries to the southward. The men, however, are strong, and remarkable for size, but they are short lived; this may, perhaps, be owing to the excesses in which they indulge themselves from their infancy. They do not scruple to sell their female slaves after they have brought them children, a practice unknown in every other Mohammedan country.

No horse, ass, or any beast of burthen, will

breed, or even live at Sennaar, or on the fat soil around it. Bullocks, sheep, poultry, dogs, and cats, must be taken every half year to the sands, or they die in the first season of the rains. Several of the kings have tried to keep lions, but no care could prolong their lives after the first rains. Sheik Adelan had two, in strong health, which were kept at Aira with his horses.

The soil in the vicinity of Sennaar, so unfavourable to the life of animals, contributes abundantly to their support. It is sown with dora, which is the principal food of the people; and it is said, though I believe not truly, to yield three hundred for one. It produces also wheat and rice, but these are sold at Sennaar by the pound. Once in his reign, the king is obliged to plough and sow a piece of ground with his own hand. Neither the rose nor the jessamine grow here; the rose has often been tried, but in vain. I saw no tree in flower near the city, but the lemon. Salt is extracted from the earth of the country, particularly that about Halfaia.

The barren waste we passed over, on our approaching Sennaar, in the latter end of April, presented, at the end of August, when the grain had sprung up, a level green surface, interspersed with large lakes of water, and ornamented with groupes of villages. Through this, the Nile, a delightful river, full to the brim, and now more than a mile broad, was winding; and on its banks were seen numerous herds of the most beautiful cattle of various kinds, the tribute recently extorted from the Arabs. Soon the scene changes. The millet begins to ripen, its leaves turn yellow and decay; the lakes putrefy, and are full of vermin; bare, scorched Nubia returns, with all its terrors of poisonous winds, sultry blasts, and moving sands.

The principal diet of the poorer sort of people at Sennaar is the millet, either in flour or made into bread. The rich heat the flour before the fire, and pour milk and butter on it; besides which they eat beef, both raw and roasted. Their horned cattle are large and fat, and the flesh is excellent; but the common meat sold in the market is the flesh of camels, and of this, the spare-rib and the liver are always eaten raw. Hog's flesh is not sold in the market, but the common people eat it openly, and the men in office in secret.

The people of Sennaar wear the long and large Soudan shirt of blue Surat cloth, which reaches to the feet; that of the men does not cover the neck; that of the women buttons and conceals the neck wholly; the men have sometimes a sash tied round their waist. Both men and women, even of the better sort, go bare-footed in the house; their floors, particularly those of the women's apartments, are covered with Persian carpets. In fair weather they wear sandals without doors, and they use a kind of wooden patten, neatly ornamented with shells. In the greatest heat at noon they have buckets of water thrown upon them, instead of bathing. Both men and women anoint themselves, at least once a day, with camel's grease mixed with civet. This they imagine, besides that it softens the skin, preserves them from cutaneous eruptions, of which they are so fearful that the smallest pimple on any visible part of their person, confines them to the house till it disappears. For the same reason, though they have a clean shirt every day, they use one dipped in grease in the night, and lie upon a bull's hide tanned, which is softened and cooled by this continual greasing, but which gives them a scent that no washing can take away.

The small-pox is not endemial in the country of Sennaar. It is sometimes twelve or fifteen years without making its appearance; but when it comes it sweeps away a vast proportion of those 'who are infected. The women of the Blacks and Arabs, and of all the slaves from the various countries of the plains and mountains, have, from time immemorial, practised a kind of inoculation for this disease which they call buying the small-pox. Upon the first hearing of its appearance, they go to the infected person, and wrapping a fillet of cotton cloth round his arm, they let it remain till they have agreed with the mother for the number of small-pox she is to sell, for which number one piece of silver, at least, must be paid. The bargain concluded, they take the fillet home, and tie it round the arm of their own child; certain, as they say, from long experience, that their child will do well, and have neither more nor less of the small-pox than the number contracted for.

All the black people of the kingdom of Sennaar, whether Funge or Nuba, are perfectly armed against the bite of either viper or scorpion. They take the cerastes in their hands at all times, put them in their bosoms, and throw them at each other, as children do balls, without irritating them. Shew a chicken to one of these animals, he bites it in fury, and it dies: let any of these men seize him, he seems sick and feeble, frequently shuts his eyes, and does not turn his mouth towards the person who holds him. They all know how to prepare any one to handle the viper with safety, by means of decoctions of herbs and roots.

The people of Sennaar and other states of Soudan embraced the religion of Mohammed for the sake of personal freedom, or the advantages of trade; but



they are Mohammedans in their conversation only, and Pagans in their hearts and practice. Unless some Fakir, or Arab saint, take pains to instruct them, the whole of their religion is comprised in the confession of faith, "There is but one God, and Mohammed is his prophet."

About twelve miles from Sennaar, on the north west, is a collection of villages called Shaddly, from a saint of that name, who directed large pits to be dug there, and plastered closely with clay, as magazines for grain. A quantity of dora is put into these, in plentiful seasons, and the pit is covered and plastered over, or, as they call it, sealed. On any prospect of corn becoming scarce, these are opened, and their contents sold at a low price. These excavations are called matamores. To the north of Shaddly, at the distance of about twenty-four miles, is another foundation of this sort, still greater. Upon these two charitable institutions the bread of the Arabs chiefly depends; for as there is continual war among these people, and as their violence is directed against the crops, rather than the persons of their adversaries, the destruction of the tribe would sometimes follow that of its harvest, if it were not for these extraordinary supplies.

Small villages of soldiers are scattered throughout this immense plain, to watch the grain that is sown, which is millet only, and it is said that the ground will produce no other grain. Prodigious excavations are made at proper distances, which fill with water in the rainy season, and afford a great relief to the Arabs in their passage between the fertile country and the sands. To the westward of the granaries, the country, as far as the western Nile, is full of trees, which makes it a favourable station for camels.

Two mountainous districts, of no great extent, rise from this plain: they enjoy a fine climate and are full of inhabitants. Each of these districts is governed by a descendant of its native princes, who long resisted the power of the Arabs, but yielded to Amru, the third of the Negro kings, about the year 1554. This prince, having forced the mountaineers to surrender, fastened a chain of gold to each of their ears, exposed them in the public market-place of Sennaar, and sold them at the vile price of about a farthing each. After this degradation he had them circumcised, and obliged them to embrace the Mohammedan religion. He then restored them to their respective governments, as slaves of Sennaar, imposing on them a very easy tribute; and they continued faithful to this kingdom, as their descendants have done to this day.

There are three principal governments under the King of Sennaar. The first of these is that of El Aice, the original country of the Shillook, the founders of the monarchy. The western Nile spreads itself over the territory, and, divided into small channels, forms a number of little islands, on each of which is a village; and this collection of villages is called the town of El Aice. The inhabitants are all fishermen, and have a number of boats, in which they sail, and it is said, rob, up and down the river as far as the cataracts. It was with incredible fleets of these that they undertook the conquest of the Arabs, who had not the smallest warning of the attempt. They had at that time no weapons of iron; their swords and lances being made of a kind of hard wood.

The reader will here perceive that the information I received on the west and on the east, (that at Dar

Fûr and that at Sennaar,) meets on the banks of the western Nile. In Dar Fûr I was told of a town called Hellet Allais, situated on the western bank of the western Nile; and opposite to this, on the eastern bank, of a town called Shillook. These can be no other than what I have now been more fully describing; they are but one; the town of El Aice, inhabited by the Shillook, "who were black and commanded the river."

The governor of El Aice must be a relation of the sovereign or Mek of Sennaar. This officer is not allowed to come to Sennaar, nor even to leave his post.

The next government is that of Kordofan; but the government of this, as has been already seen, is disputed by the Sultan of Dar Fûr, and only belongs to the strongest.

The third government is that of Fazuelo, which is south of Sennaar, and situated between the two Niles. From Sennaar to Fazuelo it is twelve days' journey with loaded camels, and seven with unloaded; probably about 140 miles. The people on the mountains of Fazuelo are of large stature, and are remarkable for strength and longevity. Sheik Adelan assured me that one of their chief men had above two hundred children, and that he was still able to hunt the elephant on foot, armed only with his lance. The person who commands in Fazuelo is not a Funge, but the native prince from whom it was conquered by Sennaar. This is a remarkable piece of policy of this barbarous nation; it must have succeeded as they constantly adhere to it, and it retains as much of justice as conquest can afford. The greatest part of the revenue of Fazuelo is gold.

Guba, and Nuba, are also two of the southern provinces of Sennaar.

The forces of Sennaar immediately around the capital consist of the Nuba, who fight without clothing, and without any other arms than a short javelin and a round shield; and about 1800 cavalry, who are black slaves, with coats of mail and broad swords. These last, I imagine, by the weight of man and horse, would bear down double the number of any cavalry in the world. Besides these, there is a great, but uncertain number of Arabs, who live close to the town, and supply it with provisions. These pay a tribute to the government, and are under its protection, and must doubtless form a part of its strength. The king has not one musket in his whole army.

When the ways were open, and caravans travelled in safety, Sennaar carried on a considerable trade with Jidda; receiving from thence India goods, which were dispersed over Soudan; and sending in return, gold, civet, rhinoceros's horns, ivory, ostrichs' feathers, slaves, and glass. Caravans also passed to Cairo and to Abyssinia. But the violence of the Arabs, and the faithlessness of the government of Sennaar, have shut the people up on every side, except that of Jidda, whither they go once a year by Suakem. From Sennaar to Suakem, it is twenty-seven days close travelling; probably about 400 miles. The gold of Sennaar, called tibbar, is reckoned particularly fine. If the Abyssinian gold sell for £3. 12s. 0d. the wakea, that of Sennaar sells for £5. 0s. 0d. Men slaves, at a medium price, sell at Sennaar at about a wakea each; but there are women who sell as high as 13 or 14 wakeas, that is 65 or 70 pounds sterling each.

I was now told by my merchant that Sheik Adelan had quitted Aira, and was encamped at Shaddy;

and that the king had expressed himself with regard to me in a very threatening manner. I immediately sent to inform the Seedy el Coom of my difficulties, and of my earnest desire to leave Sennaar; and that officer returned with my servant. "What is the difference to you," said he, "whether Adelan be at Aira, two hours journey from Sennaar, or at Shaddly, five? Is not Kittou in town? and shall I not bring every slave of the king to join him on the first requisition? I do not wish you to stay a moment longer in Sennaar; but till some way can be found to procure necessities for your journey, you are safer in Sennaar than out of it. Before the king tries to hurt you in Adelan's house, so long as any of the three brothers are alive, he will think twice of it. If any person attempt to enter the house, defend yourself; and do what you will to those who shall force themselves into it."

It was not long before I was called upon to put a part of this advice in practice. Late at night, as I was sitting in my back room up stairs, holding a melancholy council with my servants on the means of escaping from Sennaar, one of them, who had been left below, came running up stairs in dismay, saying that a number of men were endeavouring to force open the outer door. Our lamp was burning, and our arms were ready; we seized them hastily; and planting three of my men on the first landing of the stair-case, and one at the door of the house, I went into the court yard, attended by the other. The entrance from the street was through a kind of porter's lodge, in which it is the custom for servants to sit in the day, and sleep at night. The assailants had forced the outer door of this, and were now in the lodge, endeavouring to



force the inner door, having put a hand-spike under it, to raise it from the hinges.

“Are you mad, or weary of your lives,” said I, “to attempt to force Adelan’s house, when there are within it men provided with large fire-arms, that, upon one discharge through the door, will lay you all dead where you now stand?” The men were silent, and withdrew the hand-spike. At length one of them cried, “Ullah! how sound you sleep! We have been endeavouring to awaken you this hour. The king is sick; you must open the door, and come to the palace instantly!” “Tell the king to drink warm water, and I will come to the palace in the morning,” said I.

At this time one of my servants fired a pistol in the air, out of an upper window; upon which the men, seemingly about ten or twelve in number, all ran off, leaving three hand-spikes behind them. The report of the pistol brought the patrole, or guard, who carried the intelligence to my friend the Seedy el Coom; and in the morning this officer informed me that he had discovered the delinquents, and put them in irons; that the king’s servant who brought us from Teawa was one of them; and that there was no doubt of his being impaled, by the order of Adelan.

Being now well assured of receiving no assistance from the king, I sold some gold in my possession, and instantly set about the purchase of necessaries, determined to attempt the journey to Cairo, a distance of more than a thousand miles, in a direct line. Hearing of this, the king sent for me to the palace. I found him sitting alone, in a small low chamber, very neatly fitted up with chintz curtains. He was smoking with a very long Persian pipe,

through water, and seemed rather grave than out of humour. He gave me his hand to kiss, as usual, after which a slave brought in a little stool, and placed it before him. The king pointed to the stool, and said, "Sit down." I sat down, and he continued, "You are going to Adelan, I hear." I answered, "Yes." "Did he send for you?" demanded the king, "No," I replied, "but I want to return to Egypt, and I expect letters from Adelan in answer to those I brought him from Cairo." "What was in my head when I desired to see you," rejoined the king, "is this. Adelan has been informed that my servant, who brought you from Teawa, has been guilty of a drunken frolic at the door of his house, and he has sent soldiers to-day to take him, with two or three of his companions." "About half a score people broke into Adelan's house in the night," said I, "with an intention to rob and murder me; and your servant might be one of them. I understand Sheik Adelan is exceedingly displeased that I did not fire upon them; for my part, I am glad that none of them are dead by my hands, or those of my people; but Adelan has sent to the Seedy el Coom, ordering him to deliver two of them to him to-morrow, at Shaddly, where they will be executed before the door of his house, on the market day." "True; but Adelan is not king," said the monarch; "and I charge you, when you see him, to ask for my servant's life; otherwise great blame will fall upon yourself. When you return to Sennaar, I will send him to conduct you to the frontiers of Egypt."

I bowed, and took my leave. I had now an involuntary safe-guard from the king as far as Shaddly in the hope that I might obtain the life of his ser-

vant ; and, every thing being ready, we loaded the camels, left Sennaar, and passed the night at a small village three or four miles on our way to Egypt.

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## CHAPTER XXXV.

SENNAAR TO THE ENTRANCE OF THE  
DESERT OF NUBIA.

**B**EFORE my departure from Sennaar, I had prevailed upon a Fakir, or Mohammedan monk, servant to Adelan, to write a letter to his master, unknown to any other person whatsoever, to let him know my apprehensions of the king, and that I should proceed directly towards Egypt. I also requested Adelan to send me such recommendations to Wed Ageeb as should place me in safety from the king's persecution, and secure me protection in that part of Atbara through which I was to pass. One of my faithful servants, who was now to leave me, and return to Abyssinia with the tidings of my having accomplished my journey so far, was sent with the Fakir to Shaddly, to deliver this letter to Adelan.

My servants imagined I was going only to Shaddly, and the idea of returning to Sennaar sat heavy on their spirits, so that scarcely had I dismounted from my camel, and before I tasted food, which that day I had not done, they intreated me, with one voice, to continue my journey towards Egypt; pro-

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missing to bear fatigue and hunger with cheerfulness and to live and die with me, if I would proceed homeward, and free them from the horrors of Sennaar and its king. I then told them that my resolution was similar to their wishes, and acquainted them with the steps I had taken to promote its success.

On the 13th of September, we quitted the village where we had rested for the night; and after four days travelling on a course north by west, we arrived at Herbagi, the residence of Wed Ageeb, about fifty eight miles distant from Sennaar,

On the first of these days, the plain was covered with great crops of millet. Though there was not much wood, the country was not entirely destitute of it; and the further we removed from Sennaar, the finer were the trees. In the evening our road lay by the side of the eastern or Abyssinian Nile. On the second day, in the morning, we were tormented by the fly, the very noise of which threw our camels into such agitation, that they ran violently, with their loading, into the thickest bushes. The fly does not bite at night, nor in the cool of the morning; and before the heat of the day we were freed from this terrible companion, and we saw it no more. Our road again joined the river, which was here in extreme beauty, broader than at Sennaar, and shaded with acacia and other trees, in full bloom. The thick wood contained great numbers of antelopes; and the open places were covered with large herds of cattle, belonging to a tribe of Arabs, who were returning from the sands to their pastures in the south. On the third day we again passed over plains of millet; the river running parallel with us, and about two miles and a half on our right.

Herbagi is a large and pleasant village in lat. 14° 39' north. It seemed to us to be thinly inhabited; but we were told that the greater number of the townsmen were looking after their farms. On entering the town, I went immediately to wait upon Wed Ageeb. He had a very good house, considered only as a house, though it was an indifferent palace for a prince. He was about thirty years of age, had a thick black beard and whiskers, large black eyes, a long thin face, and was a man of gentle manners. He had never before seen a European, and he testified great surprise at my complexion. When I told him it was reported at Sennaar that he was going to assist the king against his ministers, he said of him, with a sneer, "To hell go the Pagan!" He spoke contemptuously of the king, but respectfully of Adelan and Abou Kalec; any one of whose little fingers, he said, was sufficient to crush the Mek, and all who belonged to him. When I had taken my leave of this prince, he sent me abundance of provisions.

In the evening I again waited upon Wed Ageeb, and made him a present of a piece of fine muslin which I had bought at Sennaar. He told me that a servant had arrived that evening from Adelan on my account; that two men had been executed for attempting to rob the house of Adelan in which I resided; and that the king's servant was to suffer on a stake, as soon as Adelan should remove from Sheik Shaddly's tomb; before which such an execution could not take place with decency. The prince bade me be of good courage, and said that I should be safer in my tent than in Adelan's house at Sennaar.

In the course of conversation, Wed Ageeb told



me that the Moorish troops of Ras el Feel had burnt Teawa, and forced the Sheik to fly to Beyla. I doubt not that I had some concern in this enterprise, and that it was executed by order of my Abyssinian friend, Ayto Confu; but I did not think proper to mention this. Wed Ageeb said that he would send a man with me to Halfaia; from whence I might go by the way of Chendi, Barbar, and the Great Desert of Nubia, to Egypt; though he thought it impossible for a European to undergo the fatigue, and encounter the dangers of this way. If, however, I chose to attempt it, he would give me a letter to Sittina, his sister, to whom that country belonged; but, after Chendi, there was no protection to be relied upon but that of heaven.

This hereditary Prince of the Arabs raises the tribute for the government of Sennaar from those Arab tribes which do not by their migrations give that government the opportunity of collecting it. The tribe whose cattle I had seen was one of those which had compounded with Sheik Adelan, four months before, in its progress northward. This tribe was said to possess 200,000 female camels, each of which, at a medium, was worth half an ounce of gold, or 2*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*; the tribute, then, paid by this tribe amounted to £250,000. There were at least ten of these tribes with which Adelan had to account, and at least six times that number that fell to the share of Wed Ageeb, whose composition was the same as that of the others, besides any extraordinary sum he might think proper to impose for himself. There is also a tax upon the male camels, but this is trifling. The young ones pay no duty till they are three years old. Camel's flesh is the ordinary food of the Arabs; but there is still room to

enquire what becomes of the prodigious number of these animals annually raised. They are destroyed in their capacity of beasts of burden, in the different caravans which traverse Africa, Syria, and Persia.

On the 18th I left Herbagi, and in five days arrived at Halfaia. Nothing could be more beautiful than the country through which we passed on the first of these days, partly woods, and partly lawns with fine scattered trees; and at night we rested at a village close upon the Nile, which was here full half a mile broad and a smooth stream. On the second day the river ran parallel with our road, with many small hills scattered on its banks; such we had not seen hitherto in our journey from Sennaar. The country was open, and laid out in pasture, and we saw goats as well as black cattle. On the third day we passed a bare and sandy country, interspersed with small coppices. The rains here had failed, and the effects of this disaster were visible in the scantiness of the crops. Many people were gathering the seeds of grass, to make bread, and their persons were reduced to skeletons; yet, though they were famishing, they gladly exchanged milk for tobacco. This night we slept at Gidid, a town with houses built of clay, and terraced roofs.

On the fourth day, at the distance of three miles from Gidid, we came to the passage of the Nile, which river was here something more than a quarter of a mile broad: in the rainy season it is twice this breadth. The boats were larger and better made than in any other part of the river. We crossed it from west to east, descending a considerable distance with the current before we landed. The manner of passing the camels gave me pain. Cords are fastened under their hind quarters, and a halter is tied to

each of their heads ; two men sustain these cords, and a third the halter ; one camel is fastened on each side of the stem, and one on each side of the stern, and thus, by swimming, they carry the boat on shore. The animals suffer much by this rude treatment, and many die in the passage, with all the care that can be taken ; but the boatmen sometimes privately put salt into the ears of the camel, which makes him desperate, and he plunges his head in the water, till he loses his breath, and is drowned ; he is then the perquisite of the boatmen. A dead camel is worth much ; but the price of ferrying over a living one, with all his merchandise, is only three mahalacs. The Arabs, when they pass a camel, tie a goat-skin, blown with wind, to the fore part, which supports him where he is the heaviest ; and guide him, sitting on the hind part, where he is the lightest.

Notwithstanding the boatmen had a very bad character, we passed, with our camels and baggage, without loss or accident. One mark of their attention to me I cannot but mention. The weather was hot, and the water clear, and I was going to swim over for the pleasure of bathing ; but they would not suffer me to undress, saying there was a multitude of crocodiles near the place, which often wounded the camels. And, indeed, the last boat had not reached the shore, when two crocodiles rose in the middle of the stream. Halifoon, where we passed the night, was on the eastern side of the Nile, and about five miles from the ferry.

On the fifth day from Herbagi our road lay through pleasant woods of acacia trees interspersed with large fields covered with grass. We passed the encampment of an Arab tribe early in the morning, and afterwards a large village, where we saw troops of

women going to their daily occupation, that of gathering the seeds of grass, to make bread.

Halfaia is a handsome town, containing about 300 houses, built with clay, and terraced at the top. It is situated on a large circular peninsula, surrounded by the Nile at all the points of west. and is about half a mile from the river. The rains here are very inconsiderable; and this peninsula, which is watered by wheels turned by oxen, is all the land sown with grain. There are palm trees at Halfaia but they produce no dates. The people eat cats, crocodiles, and hippopotami, of both which last there are great numbers. Halfaia is in  $15^{\circ} 46'$  lat. and  $32^{\circ} 49'$  east long. from the meridian of Greenwich.

On the 29th of September we left Halfaia, and at about nine miles we passed the village of Hojila, where the eastern and western Niles unite, and from whence they flow together through Nubia and Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. The western Nile, which I now beheld for the first time, is a very deep river, larger than the eastern, running dead, and with little inclination, and preserving its stream undiminished in the different seasons. We had here a ridge of mountains on our left, west of the Nile, about five miles distant, and a low ridge on our right, about eight. Our journey this day was through woods, with large intervals of sandy plains, which produced nothing, except in a few spots where corn had been sown, and promised a miserable crop. The next day, after having travelled about eight miles, we arrived at Gerri.

Gerri is built on a rising ground of white, barren sand and gravel, mixed with small masses of alabaster, a composition extremely hurtful to the eye. The small spot between the town and the river is

cultivated by means of the river : the dates are sent to the Mek of Sennaar, but they are dry, and do not ripen. This spot, however, such as it is, is called the Country of God, from a comparison with those countries to the northward of it. The town consists of about 140 houses, one story high, neat, well-built, flat-roofed, all of one height, and composed of the same earth as that on which they stand. It is something more than a quarter of a mile from the Nile, and is immediately at the foot of the Acaba, a ridge of red bare rocks, which runs from both sides of the river and crosses it. It is impossible to look at the gap through which it falls without thinking that this passage was made by the river.

At Halfaia begins that noble breed of horses called the horses of Dongola, so justly celebrated all over the world. What figure these Nubian horses would make in point of fleetness is doubtful; but if beautiful and symmetrical parts, great size and strength, nervous, agile and elastic movements, endurance of fatigue, docility of temper, and attachment to man, can constitute the merit of a horse, these are most valuable. The people are very jealous in keeping up their pedigree. Sheik Adelan, armed as he fought, with his coat of mail, broad sword, and battle-axe, together with the war saddle, iron chained bridle, brass cheek plates, front plate and breast-plate of his horse, could not weigh less than twenty-six stone. His horse kneeled to receive him, and kneeled to let him dismount; he was the first man who entered among his enemies, and the last who left them, and never changed his horse. The horses of Halfaia and Gerri do not arrive at the size of those of Dongola, where few are lower than sixteen hands. They are kept exceedingly fat upon millet; they also eat the



short roots of withered grass, which are dug from the banks of the Nile, and laid, once a day, in small heaps before them.

A little to the north of Gerri is the ferry over which travellers pass who go through the Desert of Baihouda, and by Dongola to Egypt; but this communication was now cut off by three powerful tribes of Arabs.

On the 1st of October we left Gerri, and saw the Acaba continuing to the east and the west, but curving towards the extremities like a bow: our road bore to the right for about three miles, to turn the eastern point of the ridge. This day our journey lay through woods and deserts. The flat country on each side the Nile, which is about a quarter of a mile in breadth, is sown with millet; after this space, the ground rises immediately, and is without water, and without inhabitants. In the evening we came to Hajar el Assad, the Lion's Stone, a yellow stone which the people imagine has the figure of a lion, set upon a rock. This stone marks the boundary between the territories of Wed Ageeb, and those of the Mek of Chendi; and near it is a miserable village, where a few strips of millet are watered from the river by a Persian wheel. Here are no rains that can be depended upon for the purposes of agriculture.

On the second of October, as on the first, we found all the country desert and sandy, except the banks of the Nile, on which were large villages. Along the plain we saw numbers of people digging pits, and taking out the earth, which they boil in large earthen pans, to procure salt. Great quantities of this are sent to Halfaia, and from thence to Senaar. In the evening we rested at a large village called Wed Baal el Nagga, where is another ferry to Dongola by the Desert of Bahiouda.

On the following day we continued along the Nile. For the first seven miles the country on both sides was picturesque and pleasant, and embellished with houses ; afterwards it was bare and desolate. The next morning we arrived at Chendi.

Chendi is a large village, the capital of its district the government of which belonged to the sister of Wed Ageeb. This lady had the title of Sittina, which signifies Mistress. She had been married, but was now a widow ; she had a son called Idris Wed el Faal, who was to succeed to the government upon the death of his mother. Chendi contained about 250 houses, which were not all contiguous ; the best of them being built apart from each other, and that of Sittina half a mile from the rest ; the others were miserable hovels, constructed with clay and reeds.

The governor of Chendi is called Mek Jahaleen, that is, Melek, or Prince of the Jahaleen Arabs. Chendi was once a town of great resort ; and though it be little frequented now, every necessary of life may be had there better and cheaper than at Sennaar, except wood, which is dearer here than in any part of Atbara.

I waited upon Sittina, who received me placed behind a screen ; but though she was invisible to me, I observed there were apertures left, through which I could be seen by her. She expressed herself with great politeness, talked of Adelan and the Mek of Sennaar, and wondered how a white man like me could venture so far into such an ill-governed country. " Allow me, Madam," said I, " to complain of a breach of hospitality in yourself that I have not before met with in this country." " How can that be," said Sittina, " towards a man who bears my brother's letter ?" " Why, you tell me,

Madam, that I am a white man ; you therefore see me, while you deny me the happiness of seeing you. The Queens of Sennaar did not use me so cruelly ; I had a full sight of them without any importunity." On this Sittina laughed immoderately. She then desired me to come to her the next day, when her son Idris, who, she said, wished much to see me, would have returned from the farm where he kept his flocks. I was abundantly supplied with provisions, sent me by Sittina from her own table.

The next day the poisonous simoom blew as if it came from an oven. Our eyes were dim, our lips cracked, our knees tottered, our throats were perfectly dry, and no relief was found from drinking an immoderate quantity of water. The people advised me to dip a sponge in vinegar and water, and hold it before my mouth and nose, and this relieved me greatly.

In the evening I went to Sittina. On entering the house, a black female slave took my hand, and placed me in a passage which had a door at each end. I had been there only a few minutes, when the further door opened, and Sittina appeared magnificently dressed.

Sittina was scarcely forty years of age, taller than the middle size, with a round plump face, a mouth rather large, very red lips, and extremely fine eyes and teeth. She had a small square speck of cohol between her eye-brows, another on the top of her nose, and one on the middle of her chin. On her head was a round cap of gold plate, beaten very thin, and hung round with sequins ; and a variety of chains, solitaires, and necklaces, of the same metal, were about her neck. Her hair was plaited in ten or twelve small divisions, like tails, which hung below her

waist. She wore a common white cotton garment, and had a purple silk scarf, thrown very gracefully upon her back, and brought round her waist, without covering her arms or shoulders. On her wrists she had two thick bracelets of gold, like handcuffs; and two heavy gold manacles at her feet.

I expected that the lady would have hurried through the passage with some affectation of surprise; on the contrary, she stopped in the middle of it, saying, gravely, "How are you?" I thought this was an opportunity to kiss her hand, which I did without her shewing any reluctance. "Allow me, Madam," said I, "to say one word as your physician." She bowed her head, and said, "Go in at that door, and I will hear you." The slave appeared, and conducted me through the door at the bottom of the passage, while her mistress vanished through that at the top; I entered the room, and found the lady and the screen placed as before.

"Tell me," said Sittina, "what you have to say to me as a physician?" "That heavy gold cap, with which you press your hair, will occasion a great part of it to fall off." "I believe so; but I am so accustomed to it, that I should catch cold without it. Are the women handsome in your country?" continued the Arab princess. "The handsomest in the world, and excellent in all other respects," replied I. "And do they allow you to kiss their hands?" "There is no familiarity in kissing hands; we kiss the hands of our sovereigns." "O, yes, of your kings." "And of our queens; by sovereigns I meant both." "But do you know that no man ever kissed my hand but you?" "I could not know that; but this I know, that on my part it was done respectfully; that it could not hurt you, and ought not to offend you."

“ It has certainly done neither,” replied Sittina. “ Our guides,” continued she, “ are gone to Egypt with Mohammed Towash, but somebody else will offer, and I will not suffer you to go without a good man with you. While you remain here, let me see you every day ; and, if you want any thing, send for it by a servant of mine.” After this conversation I took my leave.

I was one day sitting in my tent, when an Arab of a very unpromising appearance, naked, except a cotton cloth about his waist, accosted me, and offered to conduct me to Egypt. He told me that his name was Idris ; that he had a house below Assouan ; that he had been sick for some months at Chendi, had contracted debt, and been obliged to pawn his cloaths ; and that his camel was detained for what was still unpaid. He said this was his last journey ; for, once at home, he would cross the desert no more. After repeated conversations the bargain was made. I redeemed the cloak and the camel of Idris ; he engaged to shew me the way to Egypt ; and I promised there to recompense him according to his behaviour.

I prepared now to leave Chendi ; but before my departure I returned thanks to my benefactress, Sittina. She had sent for my guide, and had given him positive injunctions to behave well, mixed with threats if he did otherwise ; and to these she had added an ounce of gold. She told me at parting that, for knowledge of the road through the desert, she believed Idris to be as perfect as any one ; but that if we met with the Bishareen Arabs, they would show no mercy to either him or me. She gave me, however, a letter to the Sheik of one of the tribes of the Bishareen, which she had caused her son to write



from his farm, it not being usual, she said, for her to write herself. I begged I might be allowed to testify my gratitude by again kissing her hand, which she permitted me to do, laughing the while, and saying, "Well, you are an odd man! If my son Idris saw me now, he would think me mad!"

Chendi is in lat.  $16^{\circ} 38'$  north, and in long.  $33^{\circ} 24'$  east. The highest degree of the thermometer was 119, in the shade, at one o'clock in the afternoon, wind north; and the lowest 87 at midnight, after a small shower of rain, wind west; excessive heat coming from the desert, and moisture and comparative coolness from the river.

On the 20th of October we left Chendi, and halted for the night at the distance of two miles from the town, and one from the Nile. On the following day we passed five or six villages which lay between us and the river. At ten miles began the largest island of the Nile, it being several miles in length, and full of villages, trees, and corn. Opposite to this is the mountain Gibbaing, where was the first scene of ruins I had met with since those of Axum. I saw here heaps of broken pedestals, and pieces of obelisks; and the Arabs told me that these ruins were very extensive, and that many pieces of statues, both of men and animals, had been dug up here. That side of the Nile along which we travelled was barren; the other, or western side, was full of trees and corn, and had several large villages.

On the 22d our road led us through villages, and brought us to a town called Demar, where we rested two whole days. This town belonged to Fakir Wed Madge Doub, a Jahaleen saint of the first importance.

On the 25th, after travelling two hours and a quarter, we came to the ferry of the Tacazze, which

is about half a mile before this river joins the Nile. The Tacazze was here about a quarter of a mile broad, and very deep. It was clear as in Abyssinia, but its banks had lost their beauty, the country through which it now ran being barren and desert. I reflected with much satisfaction on the many circumstances this river recalled to my mind; but the one which afforded me the greatest was, that I had left them so far behind me. The boats here were smaller, and the people less expert and more rude than the ferrymen of Halifoon; but the sanctity we had acquired by our two days residence at the town of Madge Doub, and our liberal payment, carried us over without difficulty. The Tacazze is the boundary between the countries of Atbara and Barbar, the latter of which we entered on crossing the river.

On the 26th we continued our journey over gravel and sand, with woods of acacia trees, having the Nile about a mile on our left, and arrived at Gooz, a village fifteen miles below the junction of the two rivers. When trade flourished here, and caravans regularly passed, Gooz was a place of some consideration, as being the first they stopped at on their way from Egypt, and having therefore the first choice of the market. It is still the capital of Barbar; but it is only a collection of wretched hovels, composed of clay and canes; and it is not now worth while for stated guides to hold themselves in readiness, as they did formerly, to conduct caravans across the desert.

At Gooz, Idris, my guide, was arrested for debt, and carried to prison. As we were now upon the edge of the desert, and were to see no other inhabited place till we should reach Egypt, I was not

sorry to have it in my power to lay him under another obligation before we trusted our lives in his hands; I therefore paid his debt, and reconciled him to his creditors, who, on their part, behaved with moderation.

Gooz is in lat.  $17^{\circ} 57'$  north, and long.  $34^{\circ} 20'$  east. The greatest height of the thermometer was  $111^{\circ}$ .

I remained a fortnight at Gooz, and left it on the 9th of November. In three hours and a half we came to Hassa, a watering-place on the Nile, where we passed the whole of the next day, in order to make an experiment of greater consequence than any we ever made before; whether our water skins were water-tight, or not. I had taken the greatest care, while at Chendi, to have them well rubbed with grease and tar, without; but Idris told me that filling them full of water, and tying the mouth as close as possible was the only method to prove them within. We filled four skins, which might contain all together, a hogshead and a half. Our provision of food consisted of twenty-two large goat-skins, filled with powdered bread, made of millet, which is furnished at Gooz on purpose for such expeditions. It is about the size and shape of a pancake, but thinner; and after being dried at the fire, it is rubbed to powder between the hands, for the sake of package; the goat skin is then crammed as full as possible, and tied with a leathern thong. This bread has a slight acidity, which it imparts to the water mingled with it when it is eaten; and in that state it swells to six times its bulk when dry. A handful of bread, as much as one could grasp, put into the half of a gourd, which made a bowl about twice the size of a common tea-basin, and mixed

with water, was the mess allowed to each man morning and evening; and another such bowl, of water only, was drank at twice, that is about ten o'clock, and one. I submitted to this regulation as well as my servants.

There were, besides myself, four servants, two Barbarins, who took care of the camels, our guide, and a young man, a relation of his, who was returning to Egypt. We were all well armed with blunderbusses, double-barrelled guns, swords, and pistols, except Idris and his lad, who could use only lances.

The Nile at Hassa runs at the foot of a mountain, called, emphatically, Jibbel Ateshan, or the Mountain of Thirst; those who quit it, entering the desert, here taking their first provision against thirst; and those who arrive here from the desert, first assuaging theirs.

While the camels were being loaded, I bathed, with infinite pleasure, in the Nile; thus taking leave of an old companion, doubtful if we were ever to meet again. Then, having received all the assurances possible from Idris that he would live and die with me, we repeated the prayer of peace, and committed ourselves to the desert.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## DESERT OF NUBIA TO TERFOWEY.

ON the 11th of November we quitted Hassa and the Nile, and turning our faces to the north east, we entered a bare desert of fixed gravel of a whitish colour, mixed with small pieces of white marble, and pebbles like alabaster. Having travelled five hours, we stopped at a spot of high bent grass, where we suffered our camels to feed; and after three hours further travelling we rested for the night on another patch of grass, called Howeela. I here requested my guide to point out the direction of Assouan, which he did without difficulty; and it proved afterwards to be very near the exact bearing. He said, however, that we should not preserve the line, but must deviate from it occasionally, as we might find the wells in the desert capable of supplying us with water, or not.

On the second day of our travelling in the desert, we increased our distance from the river, to avoid meeting any Arab that might give intelligence to those who inhabit its banks of our being on our journey. We were now in the territory of the Bishareen Arabs; but they had retired to the mountains, a high even ridge on our right, at the distance of something more than two days journey. This ridge ran parallel with our course all the way



to Egypt. On stretching still further into the desert, we saw a hill called Assero-baybe, about fourteen miles to the north of us: this was one of the marks by which the guide directed his course. Our road this day lay wholly over stony, gravelly ground, without either herb or tree. Large pieces of jasper and of beautiful marble were every where scattered around us.

On the third day, having travelled six hours with great diligence, we rested among a few trees and shrubs, which scarcely afforded shade to us, or provision for our camels. Having now gained a sufficient distance from the Arabs who live upon the banks of the Nile; with the same view to our safety we declined approaching any nearer to the mountains, but held a northerly course to a small spot of grass and white sand called Assa-Nagga. A rock which looked like a castle had appeared before us and directed our steps. These land-marks are of the utmost consequence to caravans, because they are too considerable to be covered by the moving sands.

On the fourth day we continued our course due north; and having travelled six hours, during which time we went twenty-one miles, we rested among some acacia trees, at a spot called Waadi el Halboub; the word Waadi signifying such a place in the desert. In our way here we were at once surprised and terrified by a sight, surely one of the most magnificent in the world. In the vast expanse of desert from west to north west, we saw a number of prodigious pillars of sand, at different distances, at some times moving with great celerity, at others, stalking on with majestic slowness. At intervals we thought they were coming to overwhelm us; and

small quantities of sand did actually more than once reach us: again they would retreat till they were almost out of sight, their tops stretching to the clouds: there the heads often separated from the bodies, and the whole dispersed in air. Sometimes they were broken in the middle, as if struck with a cannon shot. At noon, eleven of these pillars ranged alongside of us, at about the distance of three miles: the greatest diameter of the largest appearing as if it would measure ten feet. They retired from us, leaving an impression upon my mind to which I can give no name, though assuredly two of the parts of it were astonishment and fear. I stood rivetted to the spot. Indeed, the attempt to fly before so swift an enemy would have been unavailing. By four o'clock these stupendous phantoms of the plain had all disappeared. We passed the night at Waadi Dimokea, and found to our great dismay, on awaking in the morning, that one side of the tent was buried in the sand which had been raised during the night.

On the fifth day our course was a little to the westward of north. We saw before us the mountain Del Aned, which marked our next resting-place. After seven hours travelling, we came to a ridge of rocks which cut across our way, and found an opening about a mile in breadth. The end of this passage brought us to Waadi Del Aned, at the foot of the mountain of that name, where we rested two hours. We then travelled an hour and a half more, and reposed for the night at a small rock in sandy ground, without trees or herbage, and bearing the ill-omened name of El Mote, or Death.

On the fifth day, immediately after sun-rise, the

the moving pillars of sand, less in size, but more in number, than the day before, rose up, and almost darkened the sun; his rays, shining through them, gave them, for nearly an hour, the appearance of pillars of fire. I believe they advanced towards us till they were within the distance of two miles. My people now became desperate. One said that it was the day of judgment; another, that it was hell; another, that the world was on fire. I asked Idris if he had ever before seen such a sight. He replied that he had often seen the pillars as terrible, though never more so; but that what he most feared was the extreme redness in the air, which was a sure presage of the coming of the simoom; and he warned us all to fall upon our faces at its approach, with our mouths upon the earth, and not to inhale the air as long as we could exist without it.

On the sixth day, when we had travelled half an hour, and while we were contemplating with great pleasure the rugged top of Chiggre, a rock which was to supply us with abundance of good water, Idris cried, "Fall upon your faces! here is the simoom!" I saw, advancing from the south east, a kind of haze, not twenty yards in breadth, and about four above the ground, of a slight purple, or blueish colour. It moved so rapidly that I had scarcely time to turn to the northward, and lay my face upon the ground, before I felt the heat of its current as it passed over me. The purple vapour I had seen soon passed; but the light air which still blew was of a degree of heat to threaten suffocation. I found in my breast that I had imbibed a part of it; and I was not free from an asthmatic

sensation for a long time after. This phenomenon of the simoom continued to blow so as to exhaust us entirely; though the blast was so faint that it would scarcely have raised a leaf from the ground. It lasted five hours and a half, when it was succeeded by a refreshing breeze from the north, which blew at intervals, for five or six minutes at a time.

This day we reached Chiggre, which is a small narrow valley of sand, closed up with barren rocks, except one opening about ten yards broad. The springs are very abundant; for, wherever a pit is dug five or six feet deep, it is immediately filled with water. We, however, found the water so foul from the dead animals within it, that we were obliged to drink it through a piece of the cotton cloth of our girdles. Chiggre is one of the haunts of the Bisha-reen Arabs, who cannot make it a station, because it affords neither trees, shrubs, nor pasture; but who have recourse to its waters when they travel between the Red Sea and the banks of the Nile, from both of which it is equally distant, and also in their expeditions from Barbar to the frontiers of Egypt.

Our first attention was to our camels, to which we gave a double allowance of millet, that they might be able to drink for the rest of the journey, if the other wells in the desert should prove insufficient. We then washed in a large pool, which being in a cave covered with rock, and inaccessible to the sun, was, I think, the coldest water I ever felt. All my people seemed greatly recovered by this refrigeration; but two people of the country, who had joined my little caravan, died in consequence of it.

Idris declared Chiggre to be half way to Assouan. Its latitude is nearly  $21^{\circ}$  north.

On the seventh day of our journey we left the valley of Chiggre, in which, during the night, the thermometer had been as low as  $63^{\circ}$ , to us an excessive degree of cold; the day, however, was insufferably hot. Again we saw an army of pillars of sand; but I began to be in some measure reconciled to this phenomenon, as it had hitherto done us no injury. The magnificent appearance of these columns in some degree indemnified us for the danger; but it was otherwise with regard to the simoom; for we were persuaded that under another passage of the purple vapour we could not escape with life. Having travelled six hours, we rested on a vast plain, bounded on all sides by hills of sand in the form of cones, and from seven to thirteen feet in height. The sand here was of an inconceivable fineness, having been the sport of hot winds for ages; and there could be no doubt that, the preceding day, the wind had been raising pillars of sand in this place; marks of the whirling motion of the pillars being still visible in every heap. While, then, we were murmuring under the influence of the simoom, Providence, by retarding our pace, had kept us out of the way of certain destruction from the whirling sands.

On the eighth day, passing over a sandy plain, Idris pointed out to me a spot more elevated than the rest, about three hundred yards to the left; and there, he said, the largest caravan that had ever left Egypt for this country, lay buried in the sand.

This day we halted among some trees to feed our camels. Hitherto, when I have spoken of



trees in this desert, I have meant only bushes of the acacia, eaten almost bare by the camels ; but, after this we came to a wood of the doom palm, though the ground was dead sand, interspersed with rock. This place is a station of the Bishareen in the summer months ; but these people were now three days journey east of us, towards the Red Sea, where the rains had fallen, and the pasture was plentiful. In the evening we arrived at Terfowey, a place full of trees and grass ; the trees the tallest and largest we had seen since we left the Nile. This day had been a holiday to our minds ; as we had been free from the terror of the sand, and the dreadful influence of the simoom.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

DESERT, FROM TERFOWEY TO ASSOUAN.

ON the ninth day of our journey through the desert, we travelled through the wood, and in the evening arrived at the well, of Terfowey. This was about four fathoms deep; but the spring was not very abundant, and we drained it several times, and were obliged to wait its filling again. Having unloaded the camels, I sent all my people to the well, and took upon myself the charge of the baggage.

It was dark, and the night was excessively cold, the thermometer being at  $53^{\circ}$ ; I sat musing by the side of a large fire; the camels were chained by the feet, and the chain was secured by a padlock; when I heard the chain clink, as if some person were unloosing it, and then, by the light of the fire, I saw a man pass swiftly by, stooping, with his face almost to the ground. I rose, and called out in Arabic, "Whoever you are, either come to me directly, or keep at a distance till day! Why should you throw away your life?" In a minute after, the man repassed among the trees. I was armed, and I advanced deliberately. "If you are an honest man," cried I, aloud, "come to the fire, and fear not: I am alone; but if you approach the camels again, the world cannot save your life." Mohammed, the nephew of Idris, who heard my voice, came running up from the well; we went to the camels, and found that the

links of two of the chains had been broken, and we saw the foot-steps of a man in the sand. I therefore sent orders to have the skins filled before day, and the men armed by the dawn; soon after which time, if they thought themselves strong enough, both Idris and I were convinced that the Arabs would attack us.

We were in the middle of a most barren and inhospitable desert. Lances and swords were not necessary to destroy us; the bursting or tearing of a water-skin; the lameness or death of a camel; a sprain or a wound which might disable us from walking; were as certain death to us as a shot from a cannon. To lose time was to die; because, with the utmost exertion our camels could make, we could scarcely carry with us a sufficient quantity of bread and water to keep us alive.

That desert, which did not contain inhabitants for the relief of travellers, had more than was necessary for destroying them. Large tribes of Arabs were cantoned in different places, where there was water and herbage for their cattle; and these, as their several designs or necessities required, traversed, in parties, the wide expanse of solitude, from the mountains which border on the Red Sea, on the east, to the banks of the Nile on the west. The only chance remaining was that their present number might be so small as that, by the superiority of our fire-arms and courage, we might leave them to that death in the desert, which either they or we must suffer.

Day broke, and found us ready; but no Arabs appeared, and all was still. The danger now was lest the man I had seen should give intelligence to others; I therefore set out in search of him, taking three servants with me. We soon found his foot-steps in the sand, and following them behind the

point of a rock, we saw two dirty ragged tents, pitched with cords of grass. Two of my people entered the smaller of these, in which was only a woman; the other servant and I rushed into the larger, and found a man and a woman, frightful emaciated figures, and a sucking child laid on a rag in a corner. It appeared afterwards that both the women were the wives of the man.

I sprang upon the man, and seizing him by the hair of the head, I laid him on the ground, and set my foot upon his breast. "If you mean to pray," said I, "pray quickly, for you have but a moment to live." The woman seized an old lance, with which I doubt not she would have distinguished herself, had she not been prevented by my servant. "Tie the women separately," said I to him, "carry them to the baggage, and keep them apart; while I settle accounts with this camel stealer." The mother then turning to her husband, said in a despairing tone, "Did not I tell you you would never prosper if you hurt that good man? Did not I tell you this would happen for having murdered the Aga?" She begged to have her child with her, which I granted; and the little creature, instead of being frightened, held out its hands as it passed me, and crowed.

We fastened the man with the chain of one of the camels, and placed him on his knees. "Answer me plainly and truly," said I to him; "for the first prevarication or falsehood you utter is the last word you will speak in this world. Your wife and your child have the same chance; you shall all die together, unless you speak the truth. Here, Ismael," said I to one of my men, "stand by him, and take my sword; I believe it is sharper than yours." Then, addressing the culprit, I asked, "Who was that good

man whom your wife reproached you with having murdered?" He answered, trembling, "It was a Black, an Aga, from Chendi."

I have already mentioned this man, whose name was Mohammed Towash. He was a Black Eunuch belonging to the temple at Mecca, and had been on a begging expedition in some of the countries of Soudan. He was at Sennaar, in his way to Egypt, when I was there; and I was extremely desirous of travelling in his company, as his person was accounted sacred; but I was prevented by the King of Sennaar, who dispatched him, purposely, without my knowledge. At Chendi I saw him again, and was again desirous to join him; which he not only refused, but he took all the three guides with him, though Sittina herself requested him to leave me one. The account my prisoner gave was as follows.

The guides, who were Bishareen, gave notice of the journey to one of the principal Sheiks of their tribe, who met the Black and his attendants on the road, with about twenty men mounted on camels, and armed with lances, and the same number on foot, with swords; my informer was one of these. The party on camels made the animals kneel down in token of respect to the servant of the sanctuary at Mecca; the vain, imprudent man dismounted from his horse to receive their homage; and, while one held his hand, in seeming friendship, another hamstringed him with a broad sword, and a third ran him through the back with a lance. The servants were, some disarmed, and murdered, and others left to perish with thirst; the camels, with the water and other lading, were taken away. Had not the pride of Mohammed Towash, or the injunctions of the Mek of Sennaar, prevented our companies from joining,



we either should successfully have fought the Bishareen, or they would not have dared to attack us. This is the only instance known of the guides having proved treacherous.

The rest of the intelligence extorted from my Bishareen prisoner by the fear of death was, that a camel might reach the chief of his tribe in a day and a half; that he, with about 300 camels, and 30 men, with some women and children, had lately left this chief, on their way to the banks of the Nile; that the rest of the party had gone forward, and that he and his wives had been left to take care of some female camels, which were not well able to keep up with the rest; that they subsisted on the milk of these camels, and that they were to follow. He added that the party at the Nile had two dromedaries with them, which would carry information from the river to the Sheik in three days, and that the Sheik would not leave his present place of encampment till he heard that the grass at the Nile was grown.

“And what did you intend to do with my camels, if you had taken them last night?” said I. The Bishareen owned, after some hesitation, that he should have taken them with him to join the party at the Nile. “What must have become of us then?” said I, “we must have died!” “Why, certainly, you must have died,” replied the Arab; “you could not have gone any where.” “And if a party of your people had found us here, would they have murdered us?” “Yes, surely; they would murder any body that had not a Bishareen with them.” “Now,” said I, “attend to me, and understand me clearly, for upon your answer to two questions depends your life. Do you know of any party of your

people who are soon to pass the wells between here and Assouan? and have you sent any intelligence that you have seen us here?" He answered with alacrity that the wells to the northward were now too scanty to supply his people, and that he had sent nobody.

I now went to the wife, attended by Ismael with the drawn sword. She thought him the executioner of her husband, and exclaimed, in a fit of despair, "All the men are liars and murderers; but if you had come to me first, I would have told the truth!" "Then go, Ismael," said I, "and tell them not to put the man to death till I come. And now," continued I, addressing the woman, "truth will give you a chance of saving yourself, your husband, and your child; but if you do not adhere to it strictly, you shall all die together." She then, with great earnestness, gave the same answers to the same questions that her husband had done before.

I rose to go; the woman burst into a flood of tears, and tore her hair in the most violent paroxysm of grief; shrieking, begging me to have mercy on her, pressing the little child to her breast, as if to take leave of it; then, laying it down before me, she cried in agony, "If you are a Turk, make it a slave, but spare my husband, and do not kill my child!"

I was melted to tears, and could not carry on a farce under such tragical circumstances. "Woman," said I, "I am not a Turk, nor do I make slaves or kill children. I am a stranger, seeking my own safety; but your husband is a murderer and a thief; the murderer of Mohammed Towash, and the thief who would have stolen my camels, and left me to perish in the desert." "It is true," said she, "they are all murderers and liars; my husband, not know-

ing, may have lied too ; tell me what he said, and I will tell you whether it be truth or not."

I left the three prisoners bound, placing a centinel over them, and held a council to determine their fate. A considerable majority of my people were for sparing the women and child, and there was not one who did not willingly decree the death of the man. When every one had delivered his opinion, I gave mine. " If ever we meet the Bishareen," said I, " I will fight them cheerfully and boldly, without a doubt of beating them ; but my courage would not be the same if my conscience were burthened with that most horrid crime, murder in cold blood : therefore my determination is to spare the life of this man, and I will oppose his being put to death by every means in my power."

Two or three of my people answered at once, " That is all very well ; but what shall we do ? Shall we give ourselves up to the Bishareen, and be murdered as Mohammed Towash was ?"

" Since you ask me," replied I, " I will tell you what you shall do. You shall follow the duty of self-preservation as far as you can do it without a crime. You shall leave the women and the child where they are, and with them, the camels to give them milk ; but you shall lame the camels so as to prevent them from carrying intelligence of our being on the journey. You shall chain the husband's right hand to the left of one of you, and you shall each take that trouble in your turn. Perhaps this man knows the desert and the wells better than Idris ; and if he do not, we have two guides instead of one, or we have a guide if misfortune deprive us of Idris. He knows the stations and the courses of his people at particular seasons, and the moment any of them are seen,

the man that conducts him shall stab him to the heart. But if he prove faithful, informing Idris where danger is and where to avoid it, on the day that I safely arrive in Egypt, I will new clothe him and his women, give him a good camel for himself, and a load of dora for them all."

Universal applause followed this speech: Idris, above all, declaring his warmest approbation. Our prisoner cheerfully subscribed to the conditions required of him; and the mother declared that she would as soon see her child die as be the instrument of any harm to us; and that if a thousand Bishareen should pass, she knew how to mislead them all, and none should follow us.

On the tenth day of our journey in the desert, having given the women twelve handfuls of bread, which we could very ill spare, and lamed the camels without doing them any essential injury, we left the well of Terfowey, and took our prisoner with us. We had no sooner got into the plain than we felt symptoms of the simoom; and in an hour afterwards, first our Bishareen, and then our guide, cried out, "The simoom!" Great as was the danger, I could not help turning to look at this visible, this almost tangible, aerial poison; and, a little to the east of south I saw it, about a yard in breadth, a thick vapour, purple, now tinged with blue, the edges not defined as before, but fading into a thin smoke. We all fell upon our faces, and felt the simoom pass with a gentle ruffling wind. It continued to blow during three hours, and at night we were all taken ill. This day one of my camels died with hunger and fatigue. The flesh was cut into thongs, which being hung on the few straggling acacia trees of our station at night, and upon our



baggage in the morning, soon became perfectly dry. We had all this day seen large blocks of fossile salt on the plain; and the well at our station was strongly impregnated with salt. We found near this well the dead bodies of a man and two camels. No moisture to decompose the matter, no animals to prey upon it, nothing but a burning sun to exhale the fluids; the bodies were dried, reduced, and preserved.

On the eleventh day, having filled our water-skins, we set forward with our faces to the north. About eight o'clock, we had a view of the desert to the westward, in that vast circular space left by the Nile in going round by Chaigie towards Dongola; and we saw the sands rise in immense twisted pillars, thicker and more magnificent than ever; the sun shining through them gave those that were nearest to us the appearance of being spotted with stars of gold. We now began to observe that the rising of these columns so early in a morning was the sign of a hot day, followed by a poisonous wind. The former was certain destruction if it involved us in its compass; but the latter produced despondency, and a kind of desperate indifference about life. I viewed the condition of my camels, I began to think we were doomed to a sandy grave, and I contemplated it with some degree of resignation. At half past eight in the evening we arrived at a sandy flat, with trees and bent grass, which, for this time, afforded sufficient sustenance for the camels.

On the twelfth day, at six o'clock in the morning, we pursued our journey, and continued it till six in the afternoon, when we arrived at Umarack, so called from a number of rack trees which grow there. Though our camels, as we thought, had fared well for the two last nights, another of them died here,



which reduced the number to five; and it did not seem probable that these could advance much further. Our situation appeared most desperate; for we, whose strength was so exhausted that we were but just able to walk without any burthen, could hardly be supposed capable of carrying our provisions, and water from one well to another. The Bishareen alone kept up his strength and spirits. He had attached himself in a particular manner to me, and I offered to free him from the confinement of his right hand, which was chained to the left of one of our company, night and day. This he refused, saying, "Unchain me only when you load and unload your camels; I cannot then run away from you, for if you did not shoot me, I should perish with hunger, but if you treat me as you have done, I cannot behave ill during the journey, and so lose the reward you have promised me at the end of it."

Two hours before we reached Umarack we saw the body of Mohammed Towash, naked, and lying unburied on the sand, withered and dried, but not corrupted. The back sinews of both the legs had been cut, and several wounds had been made with a lance and swords. We followed some foot-steps in the sand, and saw the bodies of three other persons who had been murdered, which Idris knew to be those of the principal servants of Mohammed Towash; and the next day we saw scattered the dead bodies of his inferior attendants, who had been left to perish with thirst, their dry gourds grasped in their hands, or held to their mouths.

The sight of Mohammed Towash and his servants so affected my people that, with one voice, they begged to travel all night. I believed that the scene of a recent massacre would not be the haunt of murderers, and I determined to halt at Umarack. All

we suffered there was from extreme cold, the thermometer being at  $49^{\circ}$  an hour before day-light.

On the thirteenth day of our journey we travelled between mountains of fine blue stone with thick veins of jasper. After five hours travelling, we entered a narrow valley of deep sand, the windings of which we followed till they brought us to a large pool of excellent water, sheltered from the rays of the sun by a projecting rock of green marble. We saw here a bird of the teal or widgeon kind, which I roused to make it seek its home. The bird flew directly west, rising as he flew, till he disappeared at a great height; a proof that his journey was a long one, and that we were yet at a distance from the Nile.

On the fourteenth day we left our station in the sandy valley, and continued our course through others of the same kind, bounded on either side by stony hills. We passed the dead horse of Mohammed Towash, which had perished the last of the party, having pursued the track of the wells and Assouan without a guide, till hunger and thirst had stretched him on the sand. At one o'clock we halted near a well in which there was no water; and in the evening at two wells of good water, in a large plain of sand. Near the former we passed the dead body of a man, which had been a considerable time dry. Our camels had nothing to eat this night, except the dry bitter roots of that drug, the senna.

On the fifteenth day we halted among some acacia trees, and passed the night at a place called Abou Ferege, where there was little verdure of any kind. Till now all the travellers we had seen in the desert were become dead men; this day we met a troop of my brethren the Ababde, who, to the number of

seventeen, were mounted on camels, and going to the south-west, to gather senna for the government of Cairo. We met with some caution on both sides; but parted as friends. At Abou Ferege, for the first time on our journey, we had a cloudy sky.

On the sixteenth day we left our station at half past six o'clock in the morning. At noon, I found by observation that we were in lat.  $23^{\circ}$ , from which I was convinced that our journey must finish in a very few days. At four in the afternoon the plain before us appeared to be covered with green grass and yellow flowers. We were delighted with so unexpected a prospect; but our joy was of short duration; for, on advancing, we found the whole of the verdure to consist of senna and coloquintida, plants the most incapable of being substituted as food for either man or beast. At nine in the evening we rested at a ridge of craggy mountains called Safficha, and found the night immoderately cold; the thermometer being, an hour before day, at  $42^{\circ}$ .

On the seventeenth day, at half past five in the morning, we attempted to raise our camels by every method we could devise, but in vain. We had neither time nor strength to waste, nor bread to support us; we therefore killed two of them, and took as much of their flesh as might supply the deficiency of bread during the three days which I calculated we might be from Assouan; and about four gallons of water was taken from each of their stomachs by the Bishareen Arab, who managed this with great dexterity. It is well known that the camel has within him reservoirs, in which he can preserve a sufficient quantity of water to supply him for fourteen or sixteen days; and that, when he eats, or chews the cud, he throws up mouthfuls of this to dilute his

food. Nature has contrived this vessel with such properties that the water within it never putrifies or becomes unwholesome. It was, indeed, vapid, and had a blueish tinge, but it had neither taste nor smell.

We took the small skins that had contained our water, filled them as full as we thought a man could carry them, and set out in the direction, as we believed, of Assouan. In the afternoon we saw two kites which were known to feed upon carrion; and I could not conceal my joy at this omen of our approach to the habitable world. We travelled only five hours and a half this day, and, at night, rested among some trees, at a place called Waadi el Arab.

On the eighteenth day, at half past seven o'clock in the morning, we entered a narrow defile, with rugged hills on either side. At twelve o'clock we halted at a place called Abou Scielat; and after refreshing myself with my last bread and water, I climbed one of the hills on the western side, to see what was beyond it. I did not see the Nile; but its being in the vicinity was evident, by the appearance of the uniform range of mountains which confines its waters on their coming out of Nubia. A flock of birds, of a small species of the heron, were flying in a straight line, and very low. It was not an hour for birds to go far from home; nor do these birds feed at a distance from their accustomed haunts; they were therefore seeking their food on the banks of the river. All around me was still; and sitting down, and covering my eyes with my hands, that my attention might not be diverted by external objects, I listened, and heard distinctly the sound of the cataract, which we seemed to have passed.



I returned, and communicated the welcome tidings to my people, which were not before known to Idris himself; he having, till now, entered Egypt by another way. A cry of joy followed this annunciation; Christians, Arabs, and Turk bursting into tears, kissing and embracing each other, and thanking God for their deliverance from the desert. One man is nearly equal to another in the desert; or if it be otherwise, the superiority lies in prudence, courage, and bodily strength, not in condition.

On the nineteenth day of our journey, we left Abou Scielat, and in two hours and a half we arrived at a grove of palm-trees, a little beyond the city of Assouan.

At Assouan I found money, credit, and protection; and my first care was to procure, with these, rest and refreshment for myself and my followers. My second care was to return to Saffieha, where I found my baggage untouched, by the side of my dead camels; and I brought it safely to Assouan, without either myself or my attendants having seen one person by the way.

Nothing now remained but to discharge the debts I had contracted in the desert. I began by fully recompensing Idris, my guide, for his faithful services, and then I kept faith with my prisoner. I made Idris choose him a good camel; I clothed him, gave him dresses for his two wives, and a load of dora; and I dispatched him to Terfowey with the protection of the governor of Assouan.

Though this man, a thief by profession, would have stolen my camels, and left me to perish in the desert, without remorse; and though he was now placed in a state of affluence beyond his hopes; the poor fellow declared, with tears in his eyes, that



if I would permit it, he would only go back, and deliver to his family the riches I had given him, and return to me at Assouan, and follow me as my servant whithersoever I should go. I have never yet seen uncivilized man so savage as to be insensible of, or ungrateful for, uniform kindness and good treatment.

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